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NO ONE HAS CALCULATED how many steam boilers are used in this country: in factories, in locomotives, in the cellars of steam-heated dwellings. Let us say there are 10,000,000. Suppose by some unlikely magic these 10,000,000 boilers could be abolished and the steam supplied from, say, 1,000 gigantic central stations be piped direct to every machine and radiator in the country at a great reduction in price because of saving in labor and equipment. Suppose that these 1,000 central stations were owned and controlled by a single corporation or a group of companies dominated by interlocking financial interests. The power of such a monopoly of energy would outrun the imagination. However beneficent its administration, and whatever might be the savings it effected, the mere presence of such a concentration of superpower in the hands of a small group of mortal men would be a menace to every form of democracy and freedom. Yet a situation with possibilities more sinister has come upon the people of this country with a swiftness that has taken them completely unaware.

POWER WITH A MORE UNIVERSAL use than steam can now be generated, distributed, and controlled in precisely this way. Since it can be, it will be. Guy E. Tripp, president of the Westinghouse Electric Company, has publicly stated that it is now technically feasible to build "a single superpower system" which will "furnish electric energy to the greater part of the American continent." Already interconnection of electrical transmission systems

covers whole groups of States, and combinations of capital tie these potent cords into a growing concentration of control. Governor Pinchot, in submitting the report of his Giant Power Survey Board to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, stated this most important economic issue of the day with strength and lucidity:

No one who studies the electrical developments already achieved and those planned for the immediate future can doubt that a unified electrical monopoly extending into every part of this nation is inevitable in the very near future. The question before us is not whether there shall be such a monopoly. That we cannot prevent. The question is whether we shall regulate it or whether it shall regulate us.

IN SOUTH AFRICA the Minister of Justice recently announced a system of punishment based on the theory that the severity of a sentence should be determined by the position and race of the offender. Thus, he held in effect, true equality might be achieved by giving a white man a six-months' sentence and a colored man a six-years' sentence for identical offenses—the social and personal effect on the white man would be so much greater per month than that on the Negro. But somehow we doubt if the hypothetical Negro in the case would say to himself or the judge: "That's right, after all. My nerves are strong and my relatives are all common, democratic people who will think little the worse of me. But a white man—of course, he's different. Sensitive, proud, he might even get dropped from his club. No wonder he gets five and a half years less than me, poor fellow." We doubt it, and we doubt the wisdom of adopting, or applying, a system which the vast majority of people are sure to consider discriminatory and grossly unjust. So, when we read of a clubman and golf enthusiast in San Francisco who is convicted of disturbing the public peace and is ultimately let off with a fine of \$10 because of the "humiliation" he underwent in the course of his arrest and trial, we wonder whether the membership of the I. W. W. on the coast did not increase during that week.

THE INTERALLIED COMMISSION OF CONTROL has finally finished its fifty-page report on German disarmament, with twelve lengthy annexes, and dispatched it to the Allied governments. This appalling document was prepared to justify the refusal to evacuate Cologne in January. However, it is not to be formally discussed until England and France have had an informal opportunity to bridge their differences of opinion as to the next step. Here, as in the reparation discussions, the two are at cross-purposes. England wishes a round-table discussion, with the Germans present; France still pins her faith to ultimatums. This is not wholly a reactionary desire to cling to war-time methods. France has much to lose as a result of the publicity attending a conference on the Rhineland occupation. She might be maneuvered by public opinion—particularly American—into giving up the Rhine and receiving nothing in return except moral approval. Premier Herriot in his speech of January 28 has definitely affirmed what everyone had previously guessed, that in the absence of an

international guaranty of French security "our installation on the Rhine is the essential condition, and perhaps, alas, the last condition of our security." France is out to bargain for "security" and a reduction of war debts. Better, she thinks, to do this bargaining quietly in an ambassadors' conference; there, at least, French diplomacy seems always to triumph over British.

JOSEPH CAILLAUX'S first political speech since the ending of his banishment seems to have been somewhat disappointing to those who have been looking upon him as a possible Moses to lead France out of the wilderness, and there is no immediate prospect of his displacing Herriot provided the latter can allay the financial unrest that has set the exchange rate of the franc to wobbling again. Although acclaimed especially for his financial ability, Caillaux failed to unfold a definite or original program of reform. He sidestepped the proposal for a capital levy and was specific only in his demand for abolition of high custom duties. From the American standpoint perhaps his most interesting declaration was that France must not become a prisoner in a great bastille over which would float the Anglo-Saxon flags. For a political leader this is an unusually frank statement of the opinion that virtually every Frenchman holds privately: that France must not jeopardize her industrial recovery by any arrangements for paying her foreign debt. It is only in America that naive souls still believe that France politically will, or economically can, enter into arrangements for full payment of our war loans within a future sufficiently visible to be worth the bother of the present generation.

THIS CONGRESS WAS NOT LIKELY to put the Farm Loan System back in the hands of the men who financed it and to whom its management was committed by the original act. That act was emasculated through banking influence until, as Gertrude Mathews Shelby told in *The Nation* of December 3, 1924, the 300,000 farmers who subscribed \$45,000,000 in capital stock for the twelve district land banks have been deprived of the control of their own property. Those who sincerely want to do something for the farmer would much better agitate for action by the next Congress to remedy this important and specific abuse than by pinning their faith to the recommendations of the President's Agricultural Commission, which for the most part are either truisms or else proposals that would carry us into a realm of doubtful and untried economic experiment. The control of our land banks, usurped by the Federal Farm Loan Board in the interest of the bankers, ought to be given back to the owners. That would restore the original purpose of the Farm Loan System. The only just alternative is for the government to take over the system completely, no novelty since it has already gone into banking. The Intermediate Credit Banks, capitalized with sixty million dollars' worth of government funds, are run by the Federal Farm Loan Board and the directorates of the land banks. Since the board has assumed control of the farmers' banks, Congress might consistently vote funds to buy back from stockholders their paid-up shares, making the system federal in fact as well as in name. Having been deprived of adequate representation to protect their interests, it is certainly unfair to leave farmer-stockholders with double liability for losses due to wasteful or venal conduct of politically dominated boards.

SIMON GUGGENHEIM has announced a gift of \$3,000,000, wherewith he hopes to advance American study abroad. Approximately sixty fellowships will be available each year, and although no decision has been reached as to how the fund shall be administered or the beneficiaries selected, the terms so far made public are at least refreshing. The scope of the enterprise is considerably broader than that of the Rhodes Foundation, which imposes an age limit and requires that the students come to Oxford. In the case under consideration no age limit is prescribed; marriage is no bar; distinctions of race, color, and creed are ignored; professors on sabbatical leave and persons already holding fellowships from particular universities are entitled to be candidates; and—what seems most important of all—the sixty fellows will be free to go to any country whatever and do there whatever work they may be interested in. It is gratifying to see that Mr. Guggenheim has not found it necessary to justify his scheme by claiming that it will foster international amity. The cause of learning includes all that, and fortunately no one can deny that it is a real cause.

ARE WE DEVELOPING in America a new kind of political succession—a handing on of the crown, as it were, from husband to wife? Is the enfranchisement of woman to mean that she can attain public office only as the assign of her husband? Mrs. Julius Kahn, we note, has been elected to Congress from San Francisco to take the seat made vacant by the death of Representative Kahn. We know nothing in the world against her—or for her. But she seems to have been chosen for no reason except that she was the wife of her husband. And the same is true of Congresswoman Mae Nolan, whom the same city of San Francisco sent to Washington to succeed her husband upon his death. Nor is this new type of chivalry, or sentimentalism, or what you will, limited to congressmen and their wives. The only States which have experimented with governesses instead of governors have done so by putting in the wives of men who previously held the scepter. It was the death of Governor Ross which led Wyoming to elect his wife to the post—not her own qualifications—while Texas chose "Ma" Ferguson as chief executive only because "Pa" Ferguson, the previous incumbent or incubus, had been impeached. If women are to have public office only by the circuitous route of marrying politicians and then waiting for them to die or be impeached, they are still a measurable distance from that perfect equality which some easily assume has already arrived.

HELENA NORMANTON, BARRISTER, is not the first Briton to succumb to the succulence of American cookery, but we wonder in her case, as in that of some other admirers of our cuisine, how much of it she has ever sampled. The proof that she has not gone far is found in the fact that she merely emits a few kind words and prepares to return to England. If she had sat at the table where grandfather used to sit, she would give up both England and law to settle down in America and eat. The comparative poverty of her experience is also exposed in the dishes which she selects for praise. New England pie and broiled chicken are undoubtedly entitled to high place, but they are well-known products which it requires no research fellowship in American gastronomics to discover. The naming of waffles is a subtler choice. Served piping hot off the griddle with

plenty of butter and syrup—Um-m-m! (We pause a moment to smack our lips reminiscently.) Corned-beef hash is also a good choice, and the inclusion of it by Mrs. Normanton shows how European visitors sometimes call attention to titbits of Americana which we natives seldom notice. Corned-beef hash is generally scorned here as a plebeian dish of doubtful antecedents which we would hardly recommend to a visitor. Mrs. Normanton's appreciation of it shows sound taste.

BUT AT ICE-CREAM SUNDAE we must protest. The sundae is neither American nor a food. It is not the product of any cook or kitchen but an infamous concoction of the drug-store counter, a sickly-sweetish atrocity contrived in a recent decadent age by barbarians who have never known true American cooking and lauded by savages who deserve never to know it. When Mrs. Normanton lists the ice-cream sundae as one of our national culinary triumphs and then goes on to describe American food as an "effective cure for bolshevism" we lose confidence in her judgment. Would she, we wonder, prescribe a diet of banana split for the Italian Fascisti in the hope of weaning them from bolshevism back to democracy? No, if American civilization, as Mrs. Normanton says, is "securely founded on food as mother cooked it," it rests upon a cookery which flowered—and, alas, partly withered—in an era before the ice-cream sundae had besmirched our national lips. Mrs. Normanton, we fear, got her ideas of our national cuisine in New York City restaurants, where scarcely a shadow of the best of it exists. When we want to retaste the grandeur that was American food we sneak off to the country for a few days and stuff ourselves at grandma's table. In New York City our autochthonous American cooking is done by Nicholas Papadoupoulos, in a restaurant owned by Israel Abrahamovitch, catering to the supposed taste of Patrick O'Flaherty.

OF GENERAL JAMES HARRISON WILSON, last of the corps commanders of the Union Army, who died at Wilmington on February 23, it may be said that he was of the best type of the American soldier. Graduated from West Point a year before the outbreak of the war, he quickly rose to be one of the best of our cavalry generals and at the age of twenty-seven was in command of all the cavalry and mounted infantry of the armies of the Tennessee, the Cumberland, and the Ohio. It was given to him to defeat the almost unbeatable General N. B. Forrest, one of the military geniuses of the Civil War; to capture Jefferson Davis, and to boast of the fact that his mounted troops not only took five fortified cities but actually captured a fort. His, Grierson's, and Sheridan's achievements with their cavalry proved clearly that if the War Department had devoted itself to this arm of the service early in the Civil War that war must have been greatly shortened. As it was, it took more than two years of Confederate cavalry triumphs, with J. E. B. Stuart riding around the Army of the Potomac almost at will, to bring the Washington authorities to a realization that two could play that game. We like also to think of General Wilson's admirable service in the Spanish War and as second in command in our invasion of China in 1900. Thanks largely to his humanity and high ideals our troops behaved better in the murderous and barbaric Boxer expedition than any others—that was the occasion when so-called Christian armies

spared neither women nor children and waded knee-deep in needless blood to teach the Chinese barbarians a lesson. If this country must have soldiers it should pray to have them like James Harrison Wilson.

THE RECENT DEATH of James Lane Allen serves to remind a faithful reader of American fiction how swiftly the literature of the country has grown in the present century to something like international stature. "The Choir Invisible," "The Kentucky Cardinal," and "The Reign of Law" were lovely works, but lovely in a way that does not make for permanent importance. Perhaps the fact that they were classics on the surface—delicate, decorous, shapely, and addressed to the sentiments rather than the passions—proves most easily that they were not classics at the core. At any rate, the elements of sentimentality and melodrama which for a time were concealed under their impeccable style are now more plain; and also it is plain now that they were distinctly "literary" treatments of a section of the country seen by a fond author through a far haze. In 1896 Allen protested against "those black chaotic books of the new fiction" which were arriving in greater and greater numbers from Europe. Those very monsters brought the future with them, however, and among their offspring who flourish today are Theodore Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson. Allen was protesting against a free, profound, and critical movement of the imagination; henceforth no American novelist, be he romancer or realist, will be able to afford to join that protest.

TEN YEARS AGO that square mile north of Central Park in New York City which goes by the name of Harlem bounded a prosperous section of Jews and Italians, with a sprinkling of Negroes about the fringe. Today that same Harlem, equally prosperous, is an American city in shades of black and brown and yellow, the capital of the Negro race. Never before in the history of the world have so many Negroes been brought together in one community. They have come from the South in tens of thousands, from every island of the Caribbean Sea, even from Africa—the dreamers, the adventurers, the pioneers of a race. Into the making of Harlem have gone hard work, business acumen, and a thrift which belittles the old stage conceptions of the Negro. In a little more than a decade Negroes have bought up \$60,000,000 of real estate in Harlem—comfortable homes on wide avenues, churches, shops, theaters, tenements. They own their city. To it, also, they have brought the dreams of the centuries behind them, which formed those marvelously subtle sculptures in Africa before even Columbus had sailed into the Western Hemisphere; which sang the folk music of America; which is woven in humbler but no less enduring ways into some of the greatest of our national achievements, such as the Panama Canal. The current issue of the *Survey Graphic* is a notable contribution to the fact and philosophy of a democratic America—a special number on Harlem, Mecca of the new Negro, prepared under the direction of Professor Alain Locke of Howard University. For the first time it brings together an interpretation of this new Negro from the standpoint of his poetry, his music, his gifts of temperament and philosophy and character toward the making of an American democracy. The march of his race has hurdled ages of the world's progress in half a century; he stands even with the present.

Arms and the Armers

WITH joy we record that Mr. Coolidge has initiated conversations looking toward a further reduction of armaments and that a favorable response has been received from Great Britain. Like Mr. Harding, Mr. Coolidge waited, after various gestures, until Congress expressed its desire that such a conference take place, but that does not detract from the importance of his act nor the credit which he will earn if the conference meets and achieves something. Equally commendable is his bold statement to a group of women advocating preparedness that we "can and should set an example of moderation in armament."

Already, of course, voices of pessimism are in the air. France, it is reported, is "cold" and will not accept the invitation. The conference will lead only to limitation of the competition in small cruisers or "possibly" in air armaments. Well, that "possibly" covers such a tremendous possibility of good for all mankind that the slightest chance of accomplishing it ought to be accepted and be made the most of. Undoubtedly there will be opposition both here and abroad. Those of our naval officers who have so disloyally held out against the destruction of the battleships called for in the Washington treaties are sure to be heard from again. It may be taken for granted that they will not be silent spectators at the further reduction of their field of activity; especially as they must know that if there is another sharp limitation of the navy Congress will not fail to muster out a number of superfluous officers.

As for foreign opposition, well, let us take France. The same newspaper that brings word that official Paris is entirely cold toward the proposed conference brings the news that that country has a half promise of getting another one-hundred-million-dollar loan from the United States, provided she balances her budget. These two things should be directly connected—if we are going to give any more money to that country. We should frankly say to her: "If you are not interested in cutting down your tremendous financial burden to the extent of halving the naval budget which will do you no good whatever, then we are not interested in aiding you to bolster up the franc." The very fact that the debt discussions are so much to the fore makes the calling of a conference now of especial timeliness; they must be linked.

We hope public sentiment will at once rally behind the President. We would appeal to all our readers to let the President hear the real sentiment of the country in this matter, that he may thus be strengthened against any intrigues which may be set on foot in Washington itself to render futile the efforts now under way. There is a special reason why we feel that the project ought to appeal now not only to our readers but to the general public, and that is the exhibition which has been going on in Washington for the last few weeks as to the expertness of our so-called experts, both military and naval, and the fresh demonstration that if we are to put our national safety in the hands of the professional warriors we are building not even on sand. We are constantly being told by some of our daily newspapers that we must accept without question the views of Admiral Jones or Admiral Smith because they are admirals. Yet what do we see? The most bitter divergencies of opinion, recriminations, charges, denials, and counter-charges, which simply

reveal the fact that the military and naval services are precisely where they have always been—groping in the dark, with practically no scientific basis whatever for their pretensions to establish military and naval policies.

We do not propose to enter here into the controversy as to whether there should or should not be a unified air service at Washington. When we are so eager to have all air armaments abolished we can only say a plague o' both your houses. But the fact remains that not only are the various services at odds as to whether there should be union, but they cannot agree among themselves as to the exact value of any given experiments or what can or cannot be accomplished by the new bombing machine. That there is an aggressive minority which believes that the future of warfare lies in the air we can well understand. Every reform in the navy, where there is one, has to be forced through by such a minority, precisely as Admiral Sims first made a reputation for himself by attacking gunnery conditions and bringing about a change in the methods of target practice. If General Mitchell is censured by the Government for his outspoken advocacy of the airplane, that would be but in keeping with tradition in both army and navy; incidentally it is worth noticing that Lord Thomson, the accomplished Air Minister in the Ramsay MacDonald Government, stands with General Mitchell both as to the necessity of a unified service and in his high estimate of the powers of the airplane. Rear Admiral Shoemaker has denied that after the battleship bombing tests of 1923 he changed a statement to be issued officially in the name of General Pershing, saying: "It's true, every bit of it, but, my God, we can't let this get out or it would ruin the navy;" but he might well have said it, or someone for him, for the history of naval development is punctuated by just such remarks. After the Civil War two of the great inventions of that struggle, the submarine and the monitor, were entirely discarded, the latter because it was not considered a comfortable sea-going ship. For generations our naval men have been followers and not leaders—did they not demand in 1915-16 larger submarines merely on the ground that Germany was reported in the press to have larger boats than we? Even today the submarine remains the foster child of the navy—two have been wrecked recently, and it is charged that we have very few others that are seaworthy or up to date.

But why go on? We simply wish to point out again that he who puts his faith in professional fighting men is nothing less than a simpleton. Even President Harding stated to the Washington Conference that he had abandoned his old idea that armaments protected. Certainly, the total failure of all the calculations and prophecies of the military and naval men made in advance of the World War show how unreliable these so-called experts are. And they are the worst kind of experts because they are nurtured in fear, trained to fear, and taught that they wax great only by spreading fear and prophecies of subjugation. Any detached, scientific approach to their problem is thus, *ipso facto*, barred. Finally theirs is an unmoral profession certain ere long to be abolished. Why should we longer allow the world to be dominated by men who have a personal stake in keeping alive the spirit of wholesale murder?

Who Rules America?

ONE begins to wonder whether the State Department is a part of the American Government or a Washington office for European despots. Two cases have recently arisen in which the State Department is shown to have acted not upon any American considerations whatever but in obedience to the political exigencies of foreign dictators. One is the case of Carlo Tresca, hounded in this country at the behest of the Italian Fascists; the other concerns Count Karolyi, the leader of liberal Hungary, who was gagged and silenced by Mr. Hughes at the request of the emissary of Horthy's Hungary.

Carlo Tresca was arrested on August 14, 1923, charged with circulating unmailable matter. The complaint specified the unmailable matter as part of an editorial entitled *Down with the Monarchy*, which had appeared in the May 5 issue of his anti-Fascist paper, *Il Martello*. When he was indicted on October 30, however, the Government changed the offense, and he was finally sentenced for permitting a small advertisement of a birth-control book to appear in his paper—although the advertisement appeared after his arrest and was never circulated to the readers, the Post Office having refused to mail that issue of his paper until the objectionable matter was deleted. The enterprise of the *New York World* has at last won from government officials admission of the long-suspected fact that the initiative in the persecution of Tresca came from the Italian Embassy. On May 17 Gelasio Caetani, then Ambassador of Mussolini's Government at Washington, wrote to the American State Department protesting against Tresca's article, *Down with the Monarchy*. The State Department forwarded the complaint to the Post Office Department; the Post Office Department communicated with the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice assigned an agent to the case, and Tresca was accordingly arrested—for protesting against monarchy in Italy! That the indictment was finally changed and Tresca sent to jail for a different offense does not change the fundamental fact: three departments of the American Government united in hounding him because the Fascist Government of Italy found his activity uncomfortable.

Karolyi's case is more recent and more flagrant. Karolyi represents the liberal, democratic movement in Hungary—what might be called Wilsonian Hungary. After the first Hungarian revolution he became Prime Minister and President of Hungary. His first acts were to instal universal suffrage and to begin the division of the vast landed estates which are the curse of Hungary. The Allies treated him as they would have treated a Hapsburg; they made his regime impossible; and the Socialist Government which succeeded him was almost immediately toppled over by the bolshevik followers of Bela Kun, who in turn gave way to the bloody reactionaries who still hold power. The very existence of Karolyi has been wormwood and gall to these men; they can understand a Bela Kun, but that one of their own class should lead a movement to end their special privileges is unforgivable to them.

One would expect that such a man would find such a welcome in America as was given seventy-five years ago to Louis Kossuth. Not at all. Under the beneficent regime of Charles E. Hughes it seemed impossible for Count Karolyi to obtain permission even to enter the United

States. Meanwhile the Karolyi estates were confiscated in Hungary, and the Count and his wife were left to eke out a living for themselves and their three children, by lecturing, running a boarding-house, and selling the trinkets which they had been able to save. In these circumstances friends made it possible for the Countess Karolyi to come to America to lecture. She had not landed when the National Security League began to spit lies at her. She had hardly begun her lecture tour when she was stricken by typhoid fever.

Naturally her husband in London was determined to reach her bedside. The hospital doctors made urgent representations to the State Department. Mr. Hughes relented to this extent: Count Karolyi could come to America—if he would promise neither to speak nor to write while in the United States. The Count had no alternative. He came to America, and remained, silent, at his wife's bedside through weary weeks of typhoid and post-typhoid complications. His enemies publicly abused him; friends asked him to speak. He could not; his friends went to Washington, where Mr. Hughes explained that while Count Karolyi could do no harm to America the Hungarian Government objected to his presence here; Count Szechenyi, the Hungarian Minister, had protested against permitting him to enter or to speak. Mr. Hughes insisted that Count Karolyi "should be a sport" and keep his word.

Count Karolyi has kept his word and his silence; but there are still Americans whose mouths are not gagged at the instance of Count Szechenyi and who do not intend that foreign governments shall decide who shall say what in the land created by the Declaration of Independence. Mr. Hughes is about to leave office; and old-fashioned Americans will insist that subservience to the police spies of European dictators shall be swept out with him.

Russia Is Russia

THE Balkans and Russia may be, geographically, a part of Europe; historically, racially, temperamentally, they are different from that little stretch of land which we provincially think of as the center of civilization. They are a bridge to Asia. While national states and fixed political institutions were growing up in the West they were still in chaos, swept by ravaging Eastern tribes which practiced vengeance as no Western group dared. The feudal system came to them late, and endured into the last decades of the nineteenth century; the "confiscation of landed estates" of which we hear so much today is but the completion in the East of a process ended in the West a century or two ago. Political democracy is only an imported theory there; illiteracy reigns, and some form of despotism is for the present inevitable.

Twenty years ago Russia was an unmitigated absolute despotism. The Revolution of 1905 left a vast ferment in its wake, but the abortive Duma gave no education in political democracy. The Kerensky Revolution of 1917, with its attempt to impose upon Russia the political forms of the West, was swept aside by the overwhelming tide that we call bolshevism—a mixture of war-weariness, of peasant passion for the land, and of Marxian revolutionism.

The Soviet Revolution, for reasons which honor it, drew upon itself the hatred of the capitalistic world. It was not because the Soviet leaders were attempting to im-

pose a Western theory upon a backward country, not because in that process they were guilty of excesses, that the governments of the West made common cause against it. It was because Soviet Russia represented an attack upon Western imperialism, almost the only radical attempt in history to establish a government frankly in the interest of the downtrodden peasants and wage-workers. The struggle has been long and bitter. There is little use in arguing today the relative cruelty of the White Terror and of the Red Terror; certain it is that something in the Russian circumstances led to terroristic methods by all parties, and that the monarchist groups favored by the West were as bloody as the most embittered Bolsheviks.

But times have changed. The pressure of invasion is gone; civil war is no more. The Soviet Government is seeking the friendship of Western countries, and if it does so it must be willing to listen to Western criticism of its abuses. Let us have no smug hypocrisy about it; the West is bad enough. We have our lynchings; Italy is ruled by a murdering clique of Fascists; as many Communists are in jail in Germany as anti-Communists in Russia. But the situation in Russia is none the better for that. There are still nearly two thousand political prisoners in Russia, some of whom have never been tried but have been sent by administrative order to places of exile in lost corners of Asia, on islands in the White Sea, in the desolation of northern Siberia. We call the earnest attention of our readers to the account of conditions given elsewhere in this issue of *The Nation* by Dr. Harry F. Ward and by Mr. Louis Fischer. These are no mad cries of anger against Soviet Russia; they are objective, even friendly, accounts of intolerable conditions. If liberals outside of Russia will focus their attack upon these long-continued abuses, not letting themselves be carried away into general denunciation of the Russian Government and its leaders, their pressure may accelerate the process of liberalization of which some faint signs are already evident.

Paging the Censor

THERE is no metropolitan newspaper which we have occasion to commend as frequently as the *New York World*, so it is with great surprise that we see it engaged in a campaign as unwise as that which it is now directing against the New York theater. The play upon which it centers its attack is a piece utterly without value and not worth a moment's consideration, but by its ridiculously uncalled-for indignation the *World* has played directly into the hands of all the natural enemies of its generally liberal policies. Had the play in question been treated with the contempt which its stupidity deserved it would have failed of its own accord and taught its own salutary lesson to the manager who produced it, but instead it was dragged from obscurity and offered to the attention of those interests which are always upon the watch for any favorable opportunity to resume their agitation in favor of a gag upon legitimate artistic expression.

Doubtless the author of the original editorial comment felt that he could make a distinction between art and trash, but he will not have the opportunity to do so; the effect of his utterance is to give the strongest possible support to those who have neither the capacity nor the desire to do anything of the sort. Fortunately many of his colleagues have disapproved of his action; Heywood Broun and Frank-

lin P. Adams have expressed themselves with force, and we are glad to be able to print elsewhere in this issue the comment of an editorial writer of the same journal. Yet the fact remains that if the calamity of censorship, official or unofficial, falls upon the American theater just at the moment when it shows a brighter promise than it has ever shown before of attaining the dignity of major artistic importance, then the blame for that calamity will lie to no inconsiderable extent upon the *World*.

Never has there been a completer illustration in miniature of the inevitable effect of all such agitation, however well intentioned. Opponents of censorship have always pointed out that to attack any specific work results in two things, first, the widespread advertisement of that work, and second, a demand from illiberal and bigoted people for the suppression of every work sufficiently strong or true to be in any way vital or important. It is exactly this which has happened in the present case.

District Attorney Banton, taking cognizance of the discussion, has announced his belief that not one but thirteen current productions should be proceeded against, and though he does not mention names it is evident that his list includes nearly every important play now upon the New York stage. It will be remembered that the only other time that the question of censorship was raised during the current season it was "What Price Glory," one of the best American plays, which provoked attack, and undoubtedly that play is on Mr. Banton's list.

The worst thing that can be said of the piece now under fire is that it is in bad taste—no normal person could possibly be stirred by it to crime or evil doing—but as a result of the agitation which began with it we may find it impossible to represent upon the stage any situation of which Mrs. Grundy, a casual policeman, or the military hierarchy disapproves. Once the principle of censorship is admitted, there is no possibility of restraining its uttermost folly.

On many previous occasions *The Nation* has expressed its reasons for being unalterably opposed to censorship in any form, and it is hardly necessary to repeat those reasons at the present time. We may, however, quote a very trenchant comment of Thomas Hardy which appears in his recently collected essays on "Life and Art." Speaking of the fact that the censor usually has in mind the effect of a work upon the most feeble and vicious members of any possible audience he says:

A novel which does moral injury to a dozen imbeciles, and has bracing results upon a thousand intellects of normal vigor, can justify its existence, and probably a novel was never written by the purest-minded author for which there could not be found some moral invalid or other whom it was capable of harming. . . . The crash of broken commandments is as necessary an accompaniment to the catastrophe of a tragedy as is the noise of a drum and cymbals to a triumphal march. But the crash of broken commandments shall not be heard; or, if at all, but gently, like the roaring of Bottom—gently as any sucking dove, or as 'twere any nightingale, lest we should fright the ladies out of their wits.

He touches here upon a fundamental fact and the question at issue is simple. Shall the artist write with his eye upon the good and the intelligent, or shall he assume that his first responsibility is to that imbecile minority which may possibly, according to the censor, find in a perverted vision of a work a natural food for its corrupted mind?

The *World* Hits the Trail

By JAMES M. CAIN

(Mr. Cain is an editorial writer for the New York World, which gave consent to publication of his views on the theater issue.)

ONE of the greatest blows ever struck at the American theater came when the New York *World* turned its guns on current Broadway plays, on the ground that they are indecent. Coming from another source, the attack might have been negligible. Coming from the greatest libertarian newspaper in the country, it has played havoc. The public, accustomed to seeing the *World* fight all sorts of oppression and bigotry, assumed that when the *World* led the way the case must be clear indeed, and joyfully joined in the hue and cry; and the civilized minority, although aghast at the proceedings, was left without leadership or even means of expressing a protest. Already the campaign has borne a fine crop of fruit. The two plays originally proscribed by the *World* have swelled to thirteen, as the petty gentry contributed their mite. The pernicious "citizens' jury" plan has been put into effect. The District Attorney has bestirred himself, and one of the first things he did was to send a little note to the producer of Eugene O'Neill's "Desire Under the Elms," telling him to close up.

The *World* enunciates two fallacious and intolerable principles:

1. That there is a general standard of decency that the theater must conform to; in its own language, "the line must be drawn somewhere"; and

2. That artistic excellence or intent is to be the measure of how much obscenity is permissible in a given instance.

It would be difficult to imagine two principles worse than these. In aesthetics, all that can be said is that one man's art is another man's poison. It has only been a few months since the *World* was hot against those who would suppress "What Price Glory?" This play, held the *World*, was art. Yet ask the average army officer whether he thinks it is art. It is quite as offensive to him as any play now running is to the *World*. Who is to be the judge? Why have any judge at all? The average burlesque show is pretty vulgar, but is that any reason for closing it? If it amuses sailors, soldiers, and taxicab drivers, then these citizens of the United States are entitled to their amusement. Why should they be bothered with art? In the theater, one cannot "draw the line somewhere." What takes place there is a matter between the manager and his patrons, and if the rest of us do not like the show, we can stay away. We don't have to look at it.

The particular show singled out by the *World* for attack was "A Good Bad Woman." I went to see this show. I found a third-rate play written around an amiable female guttersnipe. I found it dull but innocuous, with here and there a few lines undeniably amusing. When I came down to the *World* office the next day and innocently reported my findings, they were pooh-poohed by some of my colleagues on the ground that I was an immoral reprobate whom nothing could shock. I take exception, but let it pass. Now bear in mind that this is the play which moves the

World to allege that a low public taste is being pandered to and that "the spokesmen for the theater know, know from the inside, whether the producer is playing the game honestly or whether he is cheating. It is for them to protect the stage against that corruption from the inside which can lead only to censorship from the outside."

Now I, an immoral reprobate, whom nothing can shock, open the *World* these mornings while the crusade is going on, and what do I find? I find a pictorial comic called Mutt and Jeff. I find one of the characters in this comic favorably depicted as swindling Florida real-estate dealers out of \$500 on false pretenses, to wit, a fake telegram from one Joe Spivis: "Will you accept \$1,000,000 for your Fifth Avenue property?—Morgan." Now, being an immoral reprobate, I am not shocked by this. I am amused, and I wish Jeff all luck with his confidence game. But a day or two later, I find Jeff paying court to an heiress, a bootlegger's daughter. To hide his baldness he has donned a wig, and to add verisimilitude to the deception he has imitated the symptoms of a certain disease of the scalp. Although a reprobate, I find this offensive. So, I may add, do a great many other persons find Mutt and Jeff uniformly coarse and occasionally indecent. This one time I am fortunate enough to be lined up with a large section of both clergy and laity.

Let us now examine the implications of this. Let us apply some of the *World's* own logic to it. Is it art? No. Does the *World* think it is art? I doubt it. Does it pander to a low public taste? Unquestionably, it does; if a reprobate like me finds it low, then it must be low indeed. Why is it published? I am not privy to the reasons for its publication, but I suspect it is published because it sells papers. In other words, the motive is commercial, pure and simple. Papers have to be sold to make possible the lofty idealism which uniformly marks the editorial pages.

So, then, we have a most uncomfortably close analogy between the theatrical business and the newspaper business. Applying the standards which the *World* has set up, one would say that the *World* knows, "knows from the inside," that Mutt and Jeff is pretty shoddy stuff. One would say that it is up to the *World* to "protect the press against that corruption from the inside which can lead only to censorship from the outside." In fact, a great many people do say that very thing. Only a few weeks ago, the *Christian Century* was out with some such proposal to the newspaper owners of Chicago. But do I say that? Nay, I am a broad-minded reprobate. I have scrutinized my young morals and found them, so far as I can judge, absolutely uncorrupted by Mutt and Jeff. I have no impulse to sell real estate by means of fake telegrams. I have no impulse to be vulgar about diseases of the scalp. I have no impulse to deceive a bootlegger's daughter. In fact, as I say, I feel absolutely uncontaminated; and I am in favor of printing Mutt and Jeff as long as anyone wants to see them.

Why assume that I was contaminated by "A Good Bad Woman"? Is this a free country, or do we need to be protected by the *World* against our free, white, sovereign, independent, 100 per cent American selves?

Civil Liberties in Russia

By HARRY F. WARD

THE question of civil liberties takes concrete form in Russia, as it did recently in the United States, around the issue of political prisoners. The official view at the Foreign Office and at the Commissariat of Justice is that there are no political prisoners—"only counter-revolutionaries." This is set forth as a "basic principle." Prison officials, however, speak of "politicals" and point out that they have better food than other prisoners and do not have to work. To regard the concession of no work as a privilege in a proletarian state which makes socially useful labor a condition of the franchise is of course to give evidence of the lingering power of bourgeois psychology.

It is also frankly stated by prison administrators that there are three classes of "politicals"—spies, counter-revolutionaries, and members of other political parties. Concerning the last category it is added that of course they must be active. This classification is confirmed by those engaged in relief work for political prisoners and by those who try and sentence them. It is as impossible as it was during the post-war repression in the United States to get a real definition either of what counter-revolution in fact is or of what degree of activity constitutes guilt on the part of members of other political parties. One gets only the general statement that they must be actively working against the Government.

Technically the official denial of the existence of political prisoners has a justification similar to that for the like statement by Woodrow Wilson. To him the men in federal prisons under the Espionage Act were not politicals but criminals, because they had violated a criminal statute. To Soviet officials members of other parties whom they have jailed are violators of the constitution, because they are seeking to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat. As one non-Communist minor official put it: "But these men have assailed the liberty of the people." Communists of the older school, veterans of the revolutionary struggle and the counter-revolutions, would of course scorn to pay the unconscious tribute to bourgeois morality that is involved in denying the existence of political prisoners. It is enough for them that these persons are dangerous to the

revolutionary power and must be placed under restraint.

It is impossible to state accurately how many political prisoners there are at present in Russia. Lists prepared by exiles in Berlin are necessarily inaccurate. The organizations engaged in relief work for such prisoners have no detailed figures. They simply know that there are more

than 1,000. They are sure that there are about 500 in camps and that somewhere around 1,500 in all have been "sent away." There were a great many arrests last spring under the new regulations dealing with "economic counter-revolution." Recently the number has decreased. The official statement is that most recent and current arrests are for proscribed economic activity. The Government should be able to publish a complete list if it would, as a companion to the list that it publishes of Communist offenders and the penalties awarded them.

Concerning the treatment of politicals, the first thing said by those who are working for its improvement in Russia is that the statements of brutality circulated by exiles are exaggerated. It is agreed that when such cases are reported, they are now looked into and remedied. Nor will all Communists who deal with this situation charge it off to the officials of the old Cheka who

have been retained. They frankly admit that some undesirable get into their party and have to be eliminated. The famous incident of the killing of some political prisoners a year ago at the old Solovetsky Monastery on an island in the White Sea was in reality due to the fact that the prisoners' privilege of going out from their houses at night was taken away from them. The shooting was the result of a confusion of orders. The Government investigated, and disciplined the commandant. There are two views about this in official circles: one that the commandant was punished for unnecessary harshness, the other that he was disciplined for incompetence in management. The original controversy has been settled by the prisoners accepting the ruling that they must stay in at night. But a deeper source of friction remains, because they wanted the camp removed to the mainland before winter shut off communication.

There are three of these camps or colonies in Siberia

Evidence hitherto available on political repression and the treatment of political prisoners in Russia has been conflicting and bitterly partisan. Seeking to come as near to the truth as is possible in the circumstances, The Nation has obtained the testimony of two non-partisan observers, Harry F. Ward and Louis Fischer. Dr. Ward's article is the result of a four weeks' visit to Russia last summer, undertaken primarily to inquire into civil rights and prison conditions. (His illness delayed preparation of the article.) Three weeks were spent in Moscow; one in a visit to a Tolstoian community, three villages, and an industrial city. Dr. Ward conversed with persons in all stations of life and of all opinions, and interviewed many Soviet officials. To counteract official representations his interpreter at Moscow was a young woman who had lost all through the revolution and who had no sympathy with Communists. Much weight was given to the opinions of Americans and English long resident in Russia. The only contact in which Ward's non-Communist interpreters could not be used was with the head of the Commissariat of Justice, who furnished his own interpreter. Dr. Ward says that his most valuable interview outside of political circles was with Marie Peshkova, Maxim Gorki's former wife, who is head of the Political Red Cross. Louis Fischer is at present living in Moscow and acting as The Nation's Russian correspondent. Documents from Soviet and anti-Soviet sources appear in the International Relations Section.

and two in Russia proper. These are under the administration of the G.P.U.—the General Political Administration—the department of the Commissariat of Justice which succeeded the Cheka. There are also several mixed camps in Russia under the joint charge of the G.P.U. and the Prison Administration of the Commissariat of the Interior. This department is seeking to standardize prison treatment all over Russia according to methods of scientific penology; under the slogan “Not vengeance but self-preservation.” It has politicals in its prisons only while they are waiting to be sent away to their places of permanent internment, and it would naturally like to get the colonies of politicals under its control.

There are various degrees of being “sent away” for those charged with political and economic offenses. The economic offender may be exiled from Russia, the political to one of the Siberian colonies. Either may be sent to a certain city or town or village to remain there, on parole as it were. Or they may be given a choice of cities or of location within a certain area. The hardships under this system come from the fact that the persons sent away are left to shift for themselves in a strange environment. Sickness, unemployment, and lack of clothing therefore make demands upon relief agencies; so does the task of locating deportees and keeping them in touch with relatives and friends.

Two agencies for this purpose are operating in Russia. They are popularly known as the Political Red Cross and the Political Black Cross. The latter aids Anarchists alone, because these persons by nature and by faith prefer to be helped by their own kind. The Political Red Cross aids prisoners of all sorts, including the Anarchists when their own organization is inadequate. Both of these bodies operate without interference. They can correspond with persons abroad, and the Government informs them as to the location of prisoners. There are some cases of failure to locate, but these are not recent. In a few of these cases foul play is charged by the friends abroad of those who are missing. At present the Government affirms that the only time when information cannot be had concerning the whereabouts of persons sent away is when they are actually en route to their places of internment.

Since the counter-revolution was defeated there has been an improvement in the manner of sentencing politicals. The capture of Savinkov (whose confession and trial speech were reported in *The Nation* for October 29, 1924) removed the last internal source of organized activity against the Government, and there is a prospect, therefore, that this improvement may continue. What is needed aside from funds for the relief of sick and needy politicals is a general amnesty and limitation of the powers conferred upon the Commissariat of Justice to “send away” without public trial. In response to a question about the danger involved in the possession of such power the commissar pointed to the result, in the elimination of profiteers and speculators, as removing his own doubts and fears, and with a smile expressed his surprise at the number of such “parasites” which the United States tolerates in its midst.

The Cheka no longer exists. It was revived under the pressure of the counter-revolution, reorganized by Djerzinski, and by him sternly and successfully used to defeat behind the lines the counter-revolutionaries and the Allies who supported them. Since then Djerzinski has reorganized the railroads and is now devoting his great energy

to the general problem of economic organization, while the Cheka has been replaced by the G.P.U. That Djerzinski goes freely unattended about the streets is pointed out by Communists as evidence that unjustifiable oppression does not exist and that the many tales circulated about him were gross exaggerations. The fact remains, however, that in circles antagonistic to the Government the G.P.U. is mentioned, if at all, with a respect that amounts to fear.

The important difference between the Cheka and the G.P.U. is that the former was in effect an absolute and irresponsible agency for the suppression of the enemies of the Government, while the latter is a body with limited administrative powers and is subordinate to the Commissariat of Justice, which must make public report of its doings. It is in reality in part an open and in part a secret political police, and the uniforms of the former section can be met with everywhere. It has no powers of sentence as the Cheka had. These are reserved to the Commissariat of Justice and administered through a system of procureurs assigned to various classes of offenses, one being for counter-revolutionaries. Apparently he is both prosecutor and administrator of that section of the G.P.U. which deals with political and economic offenses. The G.P.U. can try only its own members and only for breaches of discipline. This is done through its own collegium or committee, but a procureur must be present. Just before I obtained this information one agent of the G.P.U. was ordered shot for acting as provocateur in a political case.

The G.P.U. may not, as the Cheka could, sentence to death or deport without trial. But the trial is, with the exception of prominent persons whose public trial would have a wide influence, only a hearing before a procureur. The reason given is that it would only gratify the vanity of unimportant counter-revolutionaries to give them a public hearing. Public or private, the trial is not by the jury system; the Latin rather than the Anglo-Saxon system is followed, with power given to a judge or a committee of judges rather than to a jury. This is a sharp reversion from early “revolutionary justice” when the courtroom crowd was the jury.

The present administrator of this method in the matter of politicals regards it as in process of development. Recent orders are that there must always be three persons present at a hearing and that none shall occur after 4 p. m. In unimportant cases those arrested must be brought to trial within a month; in serious cases within three months. If the procureur needs more time he must get special permission from the Central Executive Committee of the Government. Before any person can be sent away after sentence four doctors must agree that his health will not be injured by the place to which he is going, and no person over fifty-five can be sent away. The records of all political cases, except where open trial has been given, are secret. Their friends may be told what the prisoners have been punished for—except when the procureur wants to catch accomplices, when no information is given. This is the ground for the charge made by opponents of the Government—which was more justified when the Cheka was operating—that politicals are worse off than under the Czar, because they cannot get a public hearing and defense.

The attempt at reform, or, as the Communists prefer to put it, “the process of development,” includes the personnel of the G.P.U. Officials of the Okrana, the Cheka of the Czar’s days, many of whom were used when it was re-

vived in the emergency of the counter-revolution; have mostly been eliminated. It is regarded, however, as an injustice to remove a man from a minor position on this ground alone. The question of fitness and cooperation with the spirit of the present regime is paramount. The charge that "white" prisoners have been put over "red" counter-revolutionaries and have wreaked upon them a double vengeance, one for themselves and one for the Communists who have triumphed over both, is declared groundless by neutrals who have looked into it. The executive in charge of the personnel of the G.P.U. asserts that in view of criticism great care is exercised in the selection of applicants, and that training-classes are carried on and various opportunities for cultural development offered to the force in order to secure not only technical fitness but also general capacity.

While politicals may not, like ordinary criminals, automatically obtain a review of their cases with a view to possible release when half their sentence has been served, the G.P.U. states that a system of parole is being applied to them and that it has already recommended to the Central Executive Committee of the Government several partial amnesties.

How far these reforms will be carried and whether they will reach the fundamental point of total abolition of secret procedure, it is yet too early to foretell. That they are a considerable alleviation, if they are really applied, is evident on the slightest acquaintance with the situation. In a woman's prison were a few politicals in a separate room, waiting to be "sent away" to the Urals, where they would have to find work for themselves. One of them from a neighboring country had just finished an eighteen-day hunger strike in protest against her sentence. She said that in her own country she had married a Russian Communist, who had recently died; of her own preference she had come to Russia to be with people of that faith, that she had done nothing, and had been promised a review of her case. At that another woman broke out into a torrent of language, addressed without any fear or restraint to the administrator of prisons, who was present. "In Communist Russia one says one thing and another says something else. There is no truth nor justice. I have been sitting here three years." The local prison official corrected it to two years.

Everywhere in anti-government circles one hears allegations of injustice and oppression, most of them antedating the attempt at reform of procedure. The son of a former large factory-owner is sent to Siberia for three years; his friends say that the charge is "agreeing with the bourgeoisie of the world." Another man's acquaintances declare that he was sentenced to death for selling property abroad because he had received a letter about some property in Latvia which he had ordered sold to keep it from his wife in Russia, from whom he was getting a divorce. This sentence was commuted to five years' imprisonment. A man who worked for a foreign company is said by his relatives to have been sent to the Urals for three years because he told them that he had been asked by the G.P.U. to spy on them. A woman, "exiled" for two years, is told she may live anywhere except in six big cities; her circle declares it is for receiving a letter from an American friend who formerly lived with her. The American Relief Administration is connected with several such cases. A son of a former factory-owner, a metallurgical

student in his last year, with only his thesis left to finish, is dismissed in the recent "cleansing" of the universities when all others in similar positions are allowed to stay. He is sent to Siberia for two years and his friends declare that it is for asking that he be permitted to finish his course.

Such are the stories that one can pick up in a few days. It is impossible to authenticate them, but the incident of a young woman recently sentenced for "unconscious economic espionage" is verifiable. Among her male friends was a member of the G.P.U., an Englishman, and an official of the A.R.A. That is all her friends know.

The chief officials of the G.P.U. find it difficult to define "unconscious economic espionage," offering instances of what is plainly deliberate spying on economic processes and plans. Finally they suggest that "unconscious espionage" may mean unconsciously revealing to enemies or possible enemies economic information that may have come unconsciously into one's possession. Whatever may be true of individual cases, it is historically certain that no matter what the system of government, when political repression is deemed necessary and secret or semi-secret methods are employed, miscarriage of justice, rank injustice, and oppression are bound to occur. It is also inevitable that in such circumstances private vengeance should on occasion use so-called public justice for its own ends. These unavoidable results are of course multiplied when "economic offenses" are added to political crimes.

In the broader area of civil liberties in Russia there is little change to be recorded. The situation is parallel to that in some of our industrially controlled areas. While freedom of assemblage is theoretically possible, practically it is impossible because of the control of the means of organization and places of meeting. In the matter of freedom of organized speech and even of political organization, the constitution is in practice nullified. There is, however, increasing freedom of individual expression. The discussion of democracy within the Communist organization, inaugurated by Trotzky, inevitably makes in this direction. Industrial workers constantly write letters to the papers raising points where improvement is needed. One has been heard in Moscow to challenge an open-air Communist speaker and tell him that the country would be better off if all his party left it, while the policemen stood by indifferent. Once in a while some sturdy peasant rebukes an incompetent or dishonest official to his face. The counterpart of our corner-grocery discussion is arising throughout the country. In these ways a real public opinion is in process of formation and must sooner or later get organized expression.

Of freedom of the press there is none. It is directly denied, not indirectly as with us. The censor is still omnipotent if not omniscient. The multitude of periodicals and pamphlets and books all bear his imprint. The most serious fact in the situation is the regimenting of the universities which will result from the recent "cleansing." When it became necessary, on account of the lack of funds for primary education, to reduce the number of university students, first the incompetent and next the "bourgeois" were let out. The result will be less critical examination of the existing political and economic system than occasionally occurs in our universities. This condition will continue until the irrepressible tendency of the human mind to break through barriers asserts itself.

Those lovers of civil liberties in our own country who

are expecting their kind of freedom to develop in Russia have yet to reckon with the extent to which the Communist system requires regimentation. Apparently secure from counter-revolution on the political front, the Government is far from secure against the economic counter-revolution which would bring the political counterpart in its train. Hence the atmosphere that makes for repression still continues, though at a lower temperature.

The friends of freedom in other countries who have stood for the right of Russia to develop in her own way and for the recognition of her present Government may properly urge upon that Government that the time has come to grant a general amnesty to political offenders and to conduct its political tribunals in the open. They must remem-

ber, however, that the counter-revolutionary struggle has been transferred to the economic front and they must expect corresponding measures of repression in that field.

Finally they must face the whole social tactic that the Communist philosophy requires. Some Communists put it this way: "Your so-called democratic method of government by changing parties seems to us futile. You run first in one direction, and then in another. We propose to go straight forward, for a while at least. We think we have the best program for Russia that can be devised by the wit of man, and we think we can carry it out. It will take us about ten years to prove whether or not we are right, if we are not interfered with. And we do not propose to be interfered with if we can prevent it."

Political Prisoners Under Bolshevism

By LOUIS FISCHER

(The Nation's *Russian Correspondent*)

SOVIET Russia has excited such extreme hates and loves, men are so divided on the question of bolshevism, that in their prejudices pro and con, in their illusions and disillusion, all regard for objective truth is lost. Statements on Russia are put to the test of utility, not of verity. Can a certain item, true or false, be used to damage Moscow, can it prevent people from giving credits to the Bolsheviks or granting them recognition? Then it must be broadcast. The Mensheviks have been especial offenders in this respect, and their campaign of lies about Georgia, some of which were exposed in *The Nation's* article on the recent Georgian insurrection, is but a case in point.

Anarchists and Communists must necessarily be as different as black is from red. Bakunin and Marx would never agree. One readily understands, accordingly, why it was that Bertrand Russell came to Russia, saw, and, with commendable honesty, disapproved. But Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman went on a special train to make propaganda for the Bolsheviks in the Ukraine. Now, in 1920 and 1921 when they were in Russia, more political prisoners crowded the jails than today, and they were worse treated. Berkman and Goldman knew these things, for they enjoyed freedom of movement and the company of many anti-Bolsheviks who kept them informed. Nevertheless they found it possible to support the Communists and to lend themselves to winning anarchist converts to the Bolshevik cause. In other words, when you are pro-Soviet, political prisoners and imprisonment are a blot on the fair escutcheon which you regret; when you grow disillusioned they become a weapon for an open struggle against Russia.

It may be argued that in 1920 there was more excuse for political persecution. The Soviets were beset on all sides by enemies. But the Cheka was a ruthless, terroristic organization with wide powers, and it proceeded with much more rigor than the situation demanded. Even prominent Bolsheviks thought so. There was probably the same ratio between the acts of the Cheka and the provocation thereto as there is now between the acts of the G.P.U. and the provocation thereto.

The question of the Soviet Government and the political offenders is divisible into two: the treatment accorded politicals in prison and in exile; and the attitude of the

Government toward political crimes, and the procedure of the G.P.U. in making arrests, in banishing suspects, etc.

Reports of the number of "politicals" vary. One careful estimate is 3,000 in jail and 1,500 in exile in all Russia; but other figures are higher. In the fall of 1924 Edo Fimmen, the secretary of the International Railroad Workers' Union, who is not a Communist, visited Moscow and received permission to investigate the prisons. Here is an excerpt from a statement to an interviewer made after he had left Russia:

More than anything else I wanted to see Gotz (the leader of the Social Revolutionaries, who in the famous trial in 1922 was sentenced with a number of colleagues to a long term of imprisonment). I asked: "Is it possible to see Gotz?" They answered: "He isn't here." I was overwhelmed. "How? Then, where is he?" "He," they replied, "lives with his parents in a country manor outside Moscow." "What, a country manor?" "Yes, well, to improve his health." Funny. I obtained the address of the manor and went there. We met. It turned out that they had indeed let him free, and he was enjoying all the benefits of fresh air and the care of his parents.

Most of the prominent Social Revolutionaries now serving in Russian jails were given a month's freedom on parole during last summer. A number of them have been amnestied.

Several weeks after Savinkov's death sentence was commuted to ten years' isolation I saw him walking on one of the busiest streets of Moscow accompanied only by a civilian. When I mentioned this circumstance to the chief of the Russian prison system the other day, he said: "He was probably on vacation."

No doubt not all the politicals are treated as well as might be imagined from the foregoing. But their condition is not bad. In the larger cities it is good; in the smaller centers, where the prisons are likely to be poor and the authorities arbitrary, it is worse. Most of the Soviet prisons publish monthly or bi-monthly journals of their own. Some of the concentration camps do likewise. Often these magazines, practically all of whose contributors are criminals of one kind or another, are printed on good paper and well bound.

I do not believe, however, that it is a picnic to sit in a Russian prison any more than it is a pleasure to inhabit

an American or German prison. But things are not as black as a number of interested persons and a number of misled persons try to paint. An organization directed by Vera Figner, the celebrated Russian revolutionary of Schlüsselburg fame; Peshkova, Maxim Gorki's former wife, and other devoted persons, raises money by concerts and collections with which to buy supplementary food, clothing, and other necessities for the politicals in prison and in exile. This organization receives money from abroad with the knowledge of the Soviet Government.

More moderate politicals are banished to concentration camps or—what is usually the case—to towns and villages in the non-central gubernies of Russia. The adopted daughter of Korolenko, the author, exiled to a small place in Saratov province, was permitted to travel unescorted to Kharkov and to Moscow to visit relatives. Another young woman, exiled to a town in Orenburg, lives in perfect freedom except that she must report to the authorities once a week. She gives lessons in foreign languages to any who will take them. It is said that the exiles are occasionally allowed to choose their place of banishment, but generally it is chosen for them, and the choice is too frequently the thinly populated regions of Siberia or the Asiatic republics. The exiles are subjected to no regime and may do as they please within the limits of the town or village. But since they can get employment in government offices only rarely, and since they are barred from teaching school, they are left with the alternatives of ordinary labor, for which few are fit, and of lessons for which there is little demand. Unless, therefore, the exiles are persons of means or can obtain aid from family and friends, their position is not enviable. Authorities themselves admit that the lot of exiles may be much worse than that of prisoners. It is not true, as is repeatedly charged abroad, that exiles are sent to the north without warm clothing. The denial is made by non-Communists and non-officials closely in touch with the politicals.

Of the concentration camps, Narim in Siberia and Solovetsky are the best known. Solovetsky is a great monastery on an island off the Murmansk coast. The politicals, who together with their wives and children number 350, occupy the rooms of the monks. According to an official statement, the ration they receive is better than that of the Red Army soldier. They get vegetables, fruits, and other food from the Vera Figner-Peshkova committee. They may wander freely over part of the island. Relatives are permitted to visit them and, until recently, were allowed to live in the rooms of the prisoners for a week's time. In the living quarters of the prisoners there are no guards and no iron bars.

Recently the Solovetsky occupants insisted on the right to go out to sea in rowboats. This was denied. Electric light is supplied till midnight and candles thereafter. The politicals refuse to do any work; for many months they would not even clean their own rooms or chop wood for their own stoves. Old czarist politicals to whom I have spoken regard this attitude as inexcusable, for work is the greatest comfort of such a life. But the Anarchists, Social Revolutionaries, and Social Democrats at Solovetsky will not on principle cooperate in any way with the Soviet Government.

The misery on Solovetsky arises from the circumstance that the island is separated from the mainland during five months of the year on account of ice. In this period the

politicals, who are intellectuals for the most part, receive no magazines and few newspapers and letters. Moreover the diet then consists largely of fish, with the result that there is much scurvy.

We pass now from the treatment of politicals in prison and in exile to the government policy toward political offenses and the procedure regarding arrests, trial, and banishment. The head of the prisons of Soviet Russia assured me—and this was later confirmed by the Attorney General of the Union—that no politicals are sentenced to serve in prison without a public trial. I have heard of no cases to indicate the contrary.

On the other hand, all the exiles are banished administratively, that is, without trial, perhaps after only a hearing for which the defendant cannot employ counsel. The right to issue orders for banishment is exercised by the G.P.U. of Moscow, Kharkov, and Minsk, and by the Cheka of Tiflis. The term of exile is legally limited to three years and usually does not exceed two. Politicals are condemned to prison for definite counter-revolutionary acts, but they may be exiled on no better ground than a suspicion that they are unfriendly to the Government.

The former bourgeoisie, the old aristocracy, and the ex-czarist officers live in constant fear of exile. Any member of these classes may any day be arrested and shipped off with little notice to the north, south, or east for no more reason than that he is suspected of having connections with anti-Bolsheviks abroad or because the G.P.U. imagines he has information about emigrant circles or simply because he is what he is. The bourgeoisie is thus frankly terrorized, so much so that it could really do very little harm even if it wanted to.

Foreigners here frequently have difficulty in getting bourgeois Russians to visit them at home. While I have heard of no instances where such Russians are arrested for accepting a foreigner's invitation this hesitancy to cross a foreigner's threshold must have some basis in fact. There was a time when bourgeois Russians were exiled for making social visits to foreign embassies. For a while, I understand, European missions simply could not entertain on this account. But I have it on the authority of one of the ambassadors here that this form of persecution ceased some eight months ago, with a pledge from the authorities to discontinue the practice. Unfortunately this is one of the few signs of moderation on the part of the G.P.U. That organization can no longer execute or imprison people without a trial. But it still wields the broad weapon of exile, it is still guilty of indiscriminate arrests, and it still seeks to press unwilling members of the bourgeoisie into its spy service.

If the friends of Soviet Russia were to concentrate their criticism on this phase of the work of the G.P.U. they could perhaps accomplish some good. But when the enemies of Soviet Russia commence a hit-or-miss campaign in which they do not hesitate to stoop to exaggeration and falsification, attacking alike what is good and what is bad, the Bolsheviks close their ears and their hearts and decide that this is only another instalment of the old, old story whose first chapter was military intervention and whose last, for the time being, is the anti-Bolshevik bloc of Chamberlain, Churchill, and Curzon. Unwittingly some very good, sincere, and sentimental people make themselves the tools of these implacable foes of the Union of Soviet Republics.

Idle Chatter

(The Nation's *Weekly Washington Letter*)

By WILLIAM HARD

IT is earnestly hoped that Everett Sanders, the President's new Secretary, will not lead him into any riotous radical ways. Mr. Sanders, as Congressman, has spoken against the law for telling landlords in the District of Columbia how much rent they may charge their tenants—a law which the President has flirtingly favored. Mr. Sanders does not think much of the new proposed Department of Education—a department which the President adventurously desires. Mr. Sanders recoils from the proposed federal anti-child-labor constitutional amendment—an amendment which the President has recklessly supported. It is thought that the President is going to have Mr. Sanders by him in order to protect him from himself in his wilder moments.

An occupant of the press gallery wrote a dispatch listing the President's proclivities toward novel advanced legislation. He treated the subject with criminal levity. That evening he found himself obliged to encounter the President. The President did not say "That's a dastardly attack you made on me." He did not say "I thank you for your splendid tribute." He is no Roosevelt. He is Coolidge. Coolidge loves to let the facts speak their own humor. He grinned when he saw the journalist and said: "I've just been reading your little piece about me as a *PRO-gressive*."

The question is: What is a *PRO-gressive*? At a dinner party of numerous Senators the other night there was a contest in the definition of political parties. It was after business hours. It was after pretense hours. A Democratic Senator contributed the following definition of a Democrat: "A Democrat is a person who gets elected to office on the Jeffersonian principle of local self-government but who stays in office with the help of the Hamiltonian principle of federal subsidies to localities."

A Republican Senator contributed the following definition of a Republican: "A Republican is a person who believes in a high tariff against foreign commodities, without, however, restricting imports or diminishing internal competition in prices. He believes in international arbitration of all international disputes, without, however, impairing the sovereignty and total independence of the United States. He believes in the national solution of all problems affecting the welfare of the United States, without, however, impairing the local initiative of each and every individual State within the United States. He believes in everything, while at the same time maintaining the absolute validity of its opposite. That is why the Republicans are in office."

Thereupon the following definition of a Progressive was produced: "A Progressive is a person who criticizes every department and bureau of the Government and who wants to establish all sorts of new departments and bureaus in order that he may criticize them too."

At this point Mr. Charles Michelson of the New York *World* was asked to define all parties in one breath. He started. He said: "It is a case of two men in an apple orchard. They are fighting over apples. Now and then an apple gets out between them and rolls through the fence. The man who picks it up is a Progressive."

A progressive Senator said: "You mean that when thieves fall out, there is a chance for honest men."

"You misunderstand me," said Michelson. "I mean that when bootleggers fall out, there is a chance for hi-jackers."

In any case it seems to be certainly clear that not one of the three political parties is in administrative office today. All three parties—Republican, Democratic, and Progressive—are in opposition. Washington today is divided into the three parties on the one hand and Coolidge on the other.

Coolidge's appointees—such as Charles Beecher Warren of Michigan—are Republicans who are chosen by Coolidge in order to show that a Republican can be a Republican and get a Republican appointment by a Republican President for the purpose of demonstrating that a Republican organization in a Republican State cannot show a Republican President what to do.

Warren had no support and every opposition from the Republican organization in Michigan. So the President appointed him to be Attorney General.

The Republican President meanwhile has amply demonstrated that he has no knowledge of what the various other parts of a Republican Administration will do. The Republican Department of Justice proceeded to bring the Democratic Senator Wheeler of Montana before a District of Columbia grand jury for possible indictment without telling the Republican President anything about it.

This fact was doubted. Then a fact emerged which went right along with it—and more than along with it. The Republican Federal Trade Commission issued an attack upon the beet-sugar company of Charles Beecher Warren, the President's nominee for Attorney General, without even deigning to apprise the President of its intentions or of its actions.

This writer had the misfortune at a newspaper conference to apprise the President of the behavior of his Federal Trade Commission. The President had known nothing of it. The President could not prevent the Federal Trade Commission from attacking his political friend, Mr. Charles Beecher Warren; and he could not prevent the Department of Justice from starting off toward the indictment of his political enemy, Senator Wheeler of Montana.

The plans and plots of Washington are much less deep and decisive than is supposed by romantic correspondents and by distant citizens. No one man—not even the President—can grasp this town, and this government, and control it. It remains controlled by the irony and by the humorous contradiction and inconsistency of things.

One of the most conservative Senators in Washington sat at a dinner party the other night beside an inquisitive lady. She found that he had a great interest of a conversational sort in coal mines, besides being an enormous investor in inter-urban electric railroads.

"Isn't this agitation for government ownership of mines terrible?" said she.

"Not at all," said he. "Private ownership is so set on immediate profits that it does not get all the coal of a mine out. To get all the coal out, and to promote conservation of coal, we have got to have government ownership."

So Coolidge is in some ways a *PRO-gressive*; and a reactionary Senator wants government ownership of coal mines; and nothing goes by the straight line of the trenches of the factions; and everything goes by the crooked devious progressing line that is followed with some sense by flippant idle chatter.

A Party Struggles to Be Born

By LEWIS S. GANNETT

Chicago, February 22

WE could not agree on a name for our new party; we avoided trouble by ratifying without argument the Cleveland platform of July, 1924; and we left the organization of the party to the individual States. The railroad union men dropped out at the end of the first session, and the Socialists felt as if they had been kicked out on the second day. It does not sound like a promising beginning for a great new progressive party.

Yet there was a drive and a power in the convention. It got somewhere, and it got there by itself, unbossered.

The railroad brotherhoods had initiated and financed the Conference for Progressive Political Action, which had been the backbone of the La Follette campaign and called this meeting at Chicago on February 21 and 22. The brotherhood leaders, conferred before the delegates assembled, and decided to hold back. They wanted to return to the policy of "nonpartisan political action," indorsing good men in whatever party they found them. Down in the front of the convention at its opening session sat two rows of portly gray-haired men, the grand chiefs of these powerful unions. About them stormed three hundred delegates from almost as many kinds of progressive organizations—all eager, in their varying fashions, to go on. "We supposed that there would be a great uprising of the people," Shepard of the conductors explained. "We thought the psychological moment was here. . . . We were sadly disappointed." They would come back, he pleaded, if ever another psychological moment seemed imminent. Meanwhile the brotherhoods were deeply concerned in decisions being made in Washington; they could not afford to be tied to any one political party.

Morris Hillquit answered in one of the finest speeches I have ever heard. He would be one of the most effective orators in America if he did not have a foreign accent. But these progressives from the great open spaces had been touched by Klannishness. Just as the out-of-town delegates at Madison Square Garden last June disliked "Al" Smith's New York vernacular, so these plain folks were made uneasy by any hint of foreignness in a speaker's voice. They were Americans; they even resented mention of the British Labor Party. The railroad men sat almost unmoved as Morris Hillquit alternated humor with passion, scorn with appeal, cold reason with emotion. "If five million voters were not enough," he cried to them, "will you wait until we have swept the country? . . . Did you start your trade unions on that principle? Did you wait until the workers in the different industries clamored to be organized?"

Debs, old and saintly, stood with his arms akimbo for an hour, appealing to them. He told them stories of their predecessors who organized the brotherhoods out of a handful in days when they too were told that the time had not yet come. They listened—and it took affection to listen from a quarter before six until nearly seven o'clock after an afternoon of talk—but they did not heed him. Nor did they heed Wallace Short of Iowa, who pointed out that the Progressives were not a third but the second party west of the Mississippi. No one changed his mind.

So the brotherhood leaders left. In an effort to preserve their good-will, hoping that they might some day return to the new party, the convention agreed to adjourn as the Conference for Progressive Political Action, leaving that name and skeleton to the brotherhoods, and to reconvene as a new party. Everyone but the gray-haired gentlemen from the brotherhoods came back—and "Bill" Johnston, president of the machinists' union, continued to preside with tact and force, although making it clear that he had no mandate to represent his union in the new party.

The vote to organize as a new party was unanimous, but then came a new cleavage. The Socialists wanted the new party to be a labor party, not just another vague progressive grouping; and they wanted national labor unions, and such organizations as their own party, to be admitted to the national party as groups. The only national labor unions that were left were the socialist needle-trade unions, and the Westerners feared domination by the Socialists. They wanted a progressive, not a labor, party; they had won victory in some States and were on the eve of victory in others, and they wanted to continue on lines which had proved successful. It was West against East. The East was willing, but the West, almost to a man, would have none of the Socialists as a group. Argument became bitter; finally, the convention adjourned, leaving a committee to burn the midnight oil. On Sunday morning it brought in a compromise program. Each State organization should decide for itself what basis of affiliation it would adopt. The delegates were instructed to go home, organize State groups and hold State conventions to elect delegates to a new national convention next autumn, at which the States should be represented in proportion to the votes cast for La Follette and Wheeler in 1924. This compromise—the only thing which could have held the Westerners in the convention—was largely the work of Arthur Garfield Hays, who more than once revealed a genius for discovering agreement where chaos seemed to reign. Meanwhile an executive committee, appointed by the chairman, is to coordinate the State groups.

This was not vast progress toward the new party. But it represented the method which the Western groups wanted tried, and if a strong new party is to arise in the United States in the next few years it seems destined to come out of the West. It was substantially the program advocated by Robert M. La Follette, Jr., who sat in the back of the hall as an "observer." Minnesota can still have its Farmer-Labor Party and Idaho its Progressive Party; North Dakota and Wisconsin can adopt whatever name they see fit when they get around to kissing the Republican Party goodbye; and they can all think together nationally.

The Socialists of course were bitterly disappointed at the failure to form a labor party. It seemed like a disheartening repetition of the failure of 1920. In theory they are everlastingly right, but the economic organizations of the working class are not yet ready to form a labor party, and what is the use of eminent lawyers and intellectuals attempting to be the working class without them?

The struggle for a labor party will have to be fought within the unions, by working men and women. When the three hundred enthusiasts who were proclaiming a new party in Chicago opened their Sunday newspapers they had the privilege of gazing upon the faces of the new president of the American Federation of Labor with his colleagues—as guests of the real-estate board of Miami, Florida!

In the Driftway

ORDINARILY the Drifter saves his annual spring driftway for the latter part of March. Last year, to be sure, a heavy fall of snow rather interfered with his vernal elation; and now that he is about to take time by the forelock thus early, he has no doubt that frozen rain and wind will greet these words as they issue from the press. Two spring seed catalogues and a trip to Virginia—no farther south—have been his undoing. The catalogues, as usual, are irresistible. Beefsteak tomatoes, early mammoth beans, giant special cauliflower—his small garden will not possibly hold them all and he would not, for the world, spend hot hours tending them if it would, but, nevertheless, he turns over the pages and admires the colored illustrations, and makes out lists of possible seeds, which he revises daily, as if he were the veriest wholesale truck gardener, instead of the lessor without responsibility of a small patch that he shares with woodchucks, rabbits, and an occasional deer.

* * * * *

THE trip to Virginia, however, was even more romantic, for there on the ground, instead of ice, snow, or slippery mud, sprang the first young grass, tender to the touch and sweet to the taste. (Grass is one of the Drifter's favorite salads.) And full-grown maple trees were not only covered with warty lumps but had actually burst forth in a few places and showed curled fronds of an unmistakable green. The Drifter has no intention of rehearsing all the other first signs of spring. But he is interested in how universally spring is acclaimed in cities. It cannot be only because warm days are coming; warmth in a city can be as uncomfortable as cold. Nor can it be entirely because vacations approach, when for a time work stops and one has the illusion of permanent leisure. The Drifter imagines that in the spring the city dweller has somehow a feeling of direct contact with the earth that comes at no other time. At the end of summer he knows only that the days are getting colder and windier; he must go many miles from his city to see the burning colors of the fall. In winter his snow turns quickly to loathsome black slime; in summer even the trees in the park are dusty and moth-eaten. But in the spring there is a smell of dirt, good, honest, wet dirt, that penetrates even the cold and echoing caverns that are city streets. It does not have to be accompanied by new leaves or springing flowers, although these are undoubtedly a help. The soft, washed air carries what the eye cannot see.

* * * * *

OTHER than that, the poor slave in the metropolis must content himself with his wife's new hat or the tight bunches of arbutus that are sold in the streets. One of the most pathetic stories he can remember the Drifter heard in the days before prohibition had descended over the land. A small New York waif, asked by her teacher to make a list of the signs of spring, wrote: "They put swing doors on the saloons." The Drifter has a friend, a city naturalist, who contends most fiercely that any city child can find innumerable signs of spring if he knows enough to look for them. The Drifter has suggested that his friend start a class for the benighted cave-dweller and promises to attend it himself; meanwhile he must be content with the smell, and he advises his readers to sniff about them and see if they, too, do not shortly sense an awakened year.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Admiral Sims on the German U-Boats

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In the *Current History Magazine* of June, 1923, I have given an account of certain features of the German submarine campaign. If you will kindly glance over that article, you will see that the statement in your issue of December 24, 1924, that "Admiral Sims gave the German submarine officers a clean bill of health" is incorrect.

Newport, R. I., January 31

WM. S. SIMS

[In his article in the *Current History Magazine* Admiral Sims corrects a newspaper report of his views and says: "Within the past few months, in speaking to various audiences on the operations of the German submarines, I have stated that their commanders, particularly those who operated in the open sea, were specially selected and thoroughly trained men, and therefore very dangerous enemies; that most of the accounts of atrocities popularly attributed to them were untrue; that, barring the case of the hospital ship *Llandovery Castle*, I did not know of any case where a German submarine commander deliberately fired upon the boats of a torpedoed vessel; that the commanding officer and two other officers of the submarine that torpedoed that vessel were tried in Germany after the war and punished; that the submarine commanders generally acted in a humane manner in carrying out the orders of their Government, in some instances giving the boats of torpedoed merchant vessels food and water and a tow toward land, and sending out wireless signals giving their position."—EDITOR THE NATION.]

Mr. Underhill and Benavente

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The admirable letter of Mr. Antonio Llano in your number of January 14 in regard to the frequent weirdness of Mr. Underhill's translations from Benavente presents in one particular an understatement. Mr. Underhill has published not only one volume but four, the one referred to by Mr. Llano having appeared in 1917, the fourth in 1924.

The worst of it is that these translations are authorized by Mr. Benavente. The distinguished dramatist, who has himself translated from the English, has evidently not had the time to collate them with the text, reposing too great trust in Mr. Underhill's fidelity to the original and his knowledge of Spanish.

May I add to Mr. Llano's quotations two taken from the first play in the fourth American volume, merely to show that seven years' study of Benavente has not improved the translator's grasp of certain elementary peculiarities of Castilian? The italics are mine.

Original—Maximo: "Como nunca estoy bueno y nadie sabe lo que tengo." (As I am never well and nobody knows what the matter is with me.)

Underhill translation—I look better than ever, yet nobody can tell what is the matter with me.

Original—"Las relaciones de familia pesan mucho en la política de los Estados." (Family relationships between crowned heads have much influence in policies of states.)

Underhill translation—The nation, my dear, may be regarded as one great family.

Tufts College, January 25

COURTNEY BRUERTON

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I have read Mr. Antonio Llano's letter, appearing in your issue of January 14, taking exception to my translation of "The Bonds of Interest" and to the Scribner edition of Benavente. Mr. Llano's citations, both from the original and from

my translation, are quite correct, and he is further correct in stating that they are but a fraction of examples of the sort to be found not only in that particular play but throughout the four volumes already published.

Mr. Llano is properly jealous of the reputation of his compatriot, in every sense a great artist, and the warmth and evident sincerity with which he writes do him credit.

The most successful and widely read translations from the Spanish drama are those of Edward Fitzgerald, whose version of the "Rubaiyat" of Omar has long been an English classic. Some time ago, at my suggestion, the Macmillan Company assembled his eight dramas of Calderón in a single volume, which is now accessible in the Eversley Series. The following extracts are taken from the celebrated tragi-comedy, "The Mayor of Zalamea," and are all contained upon the closing page of that play.

Original—"Pues dadme los demas presos." (Then give me the other prisoners.)

Fitzgerald translation—*Well, well, you will at least give me up the other prisoners, I suppose?*

Original—"Vuestro hijo falta, porque siendo mi soldado ya, no ha de quedar preso." (Your son is missing, for, being my soldier now, he must not remain prisoner.)

Fitzgerald translation—*Your son too!*

A greater master than Fitzgerald, the poet Shelley, an incomparable artist in English, has also given us translations from the Spanish. The following quotations are from his version of Calderón's "Mágico prodigioso."

Original—

Amor solamente estima
cuanto tener vida sabe,
el tronco, la flor y el ave;
luego es la gloria mayor
de esta vida. . . . Amor, amor.

(Love only prizes what has the consciousness to have life—the trunk, the flower, the bird; then the greatest glory of this life is . . . Love, love.)

Shelley translation—

*If all that lives must love or die,
All shapes on earth or sea or sky,
With one consent to Heaven cry
That the glory far above
All else in life is—Love! oh love!*

Your readers will observe here all those shifts in person, those amplifications—and contractions—those transformations of idea and intention which have so distressed your correspondent. The first step in the translation of a prose play is the preparation of a literal draft, or crib, identical with that he has in mind. But this is not all; there is more to the task of the translator than can come out of grammars and dictionaries. The first draft is then rewritten without reference to the original, and in this process it is recreated and falls into the idiom of the new tongue. As rewritten it is then compared with the original. Where the unit of translation is the word, the literal reading is retained, but where it is the idea, the rhythm, the color, the movement, the mood, these of course govern and the literal norm is discarded. Professor Romera Navarro of the University of Pennsylvania has made a painstaking study of my translation of "The Bonds of Interest," collating at length the English with the original. The results of his investigations are contained in his "Hispanismo en Norte-América," Madrid, 1917, pp. 391-395. He writes: "The translation is faithful, polished, and rich. Apparently the translator has gone slowly and carefully about his task, without sparing time or effort, and the result is in all respects satisfactory. Indeed, as I collate it with the original, I am confirmed in my belief that a Spanish text . . . can be translated into English literally with the exception, of course, of ellipses and inversions which are less admissible in that language than in our own. . . . I have italicized the words and phrases which do not correspond to the letter of the original. As a mere student of the English lan-

guage, I do not undertake to amend Mr. Underhill's pages; my object is merely to indicate what he was able to do and what he did not deem it wise to attempt." Mr. Llano need have no further uneasiness as to possible discredit which may be brought upon Spain through the translation of "The Bonds of Interest." Its peculiar problems were all discussed in advance with Juan Ramón Jiménez, most fastidious of contemporary Spanish poets, and the manuscript was approved before publication by Mr. Benavente, himself an ideal translator from the English.

La Prensa, the Spanish daily of this city, is at present carrying my translation of "La Escuela de las Princesas" from the fourth volume of the Scribner edition, in its educational section, the English appearing in parallel columns with the original, so that teachers and students may familiarize themselves with the principles and practice of literary translation by comparison. I hope also, at an early opportunity, to consider this subject exhaustively before the American Association of Teachers of Spanish, or before the Instituto de las Españas, as well as to give it adequate, if succinct, treatment in one of the forthcoming volumes of the Scribner edition.

New York, January 30

JOHN GARRETT UNDERHILL

Prisons and Child Labor

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: "Resolutions approving construction of a new Eastern Penitentiary and condemning the proposed child-labor amendment were adopted at the quarterly meeting of the Philadelphia Builders and Employers Association, held in the Bellevue-Stratford yesterday."—Press item.

The above gem has just appeared in the clippings. Pennsylvania has more children under sixteen years of age at work than any other State. The Builders' and Employers' Association naturally wants more prisons to build—three where there is now one.

Children released too early from school to work, tempted beyond their strength as messengers, carrying money to the bank, by no means rarely arrive (via juvenile courts and reform schools) at prisons and penitentiaries. I have had personal acquaintance with more than one such young victim.

Little girls from meager tenements, taken on as "extras" in the holiday "rush," spending their first working days in toy departments or in carrying silk stockings to be wrapped, are apt to pilfer like squirrels and crows. They are, however, punished as human beings, often by forced contact with older, more experienced offenders, from whom they learn nothing good. These facts are common knowledge. Later on the girls, too, encourage, quite unintentionally as inmates, the Builders and Employers Association's zeal for more and larger institutions.

New York, February 3

FLORENCE KELLEY

"Anna Christie" in Russia

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: It might interest you to hear about the amazing success of "Anna Christie" in Russia. Presented for the first time in Moscow on October 4 in the Comedia Theater, "Anna Christie" is still playing to capacity houses. One can realize the success of Mr. O'Neill's play by reading the speech made by the Soviet Minister of Education, Mr. Lunacharsky, in which he said: "The success of 'Anna Christie' is without precedent in the history of the modern Russian theater."

"Anna Christie" was translated last spring by me and produced under the personal direction of the foremost Russian playwright, Count Tolstoi.

O. Henry, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and Sinclair Lewis are among the "best sellers" in Russia today.

VOLDEMAR VETLUGUIN,

New York, December 13

Associate Editor, *Russky Golos*

Books and Plays

First Glance

ONE is accustomed to hear of Mr. George Saintsbury that he has read more books than any man alive, and I am inclined to believe it in view of the long and rich record as editor, reviewer, professor, and literary historian which now at eighty he can survey behind him. But there are no statistics, unfortunately; though some might be gathered in support of the other conviction I have that he has liked more books than any man who ever lived. The fourth volume of his "Collected Essays and Papers" (Dutton: \$4.25), dealing though it does with wholly French subjects—Baudelaire, Flaubert, Chamfort, Rivarol, Saint-Evremond, Renan, Quinet, Gautier, Anatole France, Parny, and lesser men—will serve as well as any other of his works to exhibit him as the lover *par excellence* of all the literature that is capable for one good reason or another of being loved.

Here as always Mr. Saintsbury insists that the business of a literary critic is to say how well a given author has written—on whatever subject, from ribbons to deity—and then stop short. The critic's prejudices in extra-literary matters must never intrude; and for the most part Mr. Saintsbury has kept his own private toryism out. The ideas of the author who is being judged cannot possibly matter; and in this connection Mr. Saintsbury is assisted by an unconquerable aversion to ideas anyway. Most keys to the mystery of the universe, he feels, turn round in the lock but do not open it. No. "There is a loyalty to art in the mind of every man competent to criticize at all which makes it impossible for him to call good work, as work, bad; or bad work, as work, good."

Even then a critic might starve in the midst of plenty for lack of a good appetite. Mr. Saintsbury, fortified by his doctrine of "absolute catholicity," has fed well. The fact that Shelley, for instance, is unlike Dryden in every conceivable respect has never prevented Mr. Saintsbury from finding both poets highly palatable; and the number of minor writers whom he has managed somehow to praise is all but grotesquely great. In the exercise of his function as a resuscitator of near-nonentities he has been forced into a certain ponderous accuracy of phrase, a certain plethora of qualification; and I had thought that the limit of this was reached in a sentence which he once wrote concerning the worst poem (perhaps) in English, Edward Benlowes's "Theophila." He said then: "The eccentricity of 'Theophila' does not prevent it from containing not a few passages, sometimes of length, that require very little allowance or apology from any tolerably catholic-tasted reader of poetry." But I see now that he has written of Rivarol: "Sainte-Beuve acknowledges that he is *presque un grand écrivain*, and I venture to think that the *presque* expresses very close contiguity." That is more delightful. For I must confess that I have always been delighted by the lumberings of this lover among his *écrivains manqués*. And I am sure that no one has put the case for his kind of criticism better than he himself has put it in the essay on Gautier: "You found out that a witch was a witch by discovering an insensitive spot in her body: you find out that a critic is not a critic by discovering an insensitive spot in his."

If during his forty-odd years of purely literary criticism Mr. Saintsbury managed to keep his toryism to himself, he has made no effort to suppress it in certain recent books of a personal nature. "A Last Scrap Book" (Macmillan: \$3) is little more than a roll call of the "crankeries" he hates: pacifism, prohibition, birth control, universal education, abolition of capital punishment, female suffrage, daylight saving, the League of Nations, and the Labor Government. One need not follow him down this list to appreciate—as one must if one is his own kind of critic—the quality of the writing which it has inspired him to do. "The essential disgustingness of democracy," he remarks somewhere, "cannot be uttered, though it might be spluttered—a degenerate form of utterance of which I am not fond." In any conceivable millennium—how he loathes millenniums!—Mr. Saintsbury will remain loyal to his art.

MARK VAN DOREN

Psychology Applied

- Auto-Suggestion for Mothers.* By R. C. Waters. George H. Doran Company. \$2.
Mind as a Force. By C. F. Harford. Henry Holt and Company. \$1.50.
Our Fear Complexes. By E. H. Williams and E. B. Hoag. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. \$2.50.
Abnormal Psychology and Education. By Frank Watts. D. Appleton and Company. \$2.
An Introduction to the Study of the Mind. By W. A. White. Washington: Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company.

A GROUP of books on the "new" psychology can best be arranged in order from the less probable to the more probable. Authorities like Coué, Freud, and Bergson and topics like auto-suggestion, mind as a force, and fear complexes can be judged only by the comparative method. Thus "Auto-Suggestion for Mothers," described as the famous Coué method applied to children, seems highly improbable in many of its statements and claims. Coué did not "discover" the control of auto-suggestion under the name of conscious auto-suggestion. He simply carried out the principles of Bernheim, and founded the new Nancy school. But Coué, like this recent pupil of his, made too sweeping claims. Suggestibility has a limited field, and some consider it merely one of the conditions characteristic of psychesthesia—associated with disorders of the will, of belief, and of the sense of reality.

But Coué and his disciples consider it a panacea, a cure-all. Their outlook is one of complacent optimism. Thus with the magic formula of "Better and Better" Mr. Waters assures us that we can "conquer our diseases and ills, control our minds, and obtain self-mastery, mental, moral, and physical." The first part of this claim at once awakens our suspicion, for the author actually states that there is no part of the human mechanism, from tonsils to the sexual organs, which cannot be reached by auto-suggestion. It may be that sleep-suggestion is useful for corrective treatment of "laziness, carelessness, untruthfulness, and disobedience," though no special cases are cited; but the treatment as here described taxes one's powers of belief. Auto-suggest and the tonsils become smaller and smaller, tubercular tissues healthier and healthier, and so on. But the general health formula can be made even more specific. The child by nightly incantation of the mother can be made better and better in arithmetic or any school subject, and—to jump to the end of this subject—the mother and father, by a joint incantation, can "determine at will a child of the chosen sex."

From mind as a sex-determiner we turn to "Mind as a Force." This title sounds modern, but the author's views are rather antiquated. He divides man's nature into spirit, body, and soul, states that it is a strange fact that among the animistic races of Africa it is the "spiritual" which is supreme, but does not draw the conclusion that "spirit" is the mere verbal ghost of primitive animism. The soul with him, however, is kept as a mere name; and here he is in line with the modern "no-soul" psychologists. But the mind remains, and this is defined as force in consonance with Bergson's "énergie spirituelle." So far, so good. But with the application of this dynamic view trouble arises because of a false analogy and two faulty preconceptions. While the author's analogy makes the mind a wireless receiver, his chart of the mind presents a hook-up which would bring despair to the wireless fan and to the psychologist alike. The conventional conclusion is also drawn that since the mind is not only a receiver but a transmitter telepathy follows, because the phenomena of wireless telegraphy demonstrate the possibility of communication even at a distance. Finally, because one can tune in on a wireless, man's spiritual nature can be "in tune with the infinite."

Such curious reasoning on the part of a medical man is explained by the fact that it is less than four years since he commenced the definite study of psychology, his avenue of approach being through the Pelman system, a British form of commercialized occultism which teaches anything from mind mastery to court etiquette. Besides Pelmanism there is another faulty preconception, a firm belief in the thesis of Henry Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Logically the title of that once popular book should be reversed. The therapeutic advice of this medical man is most curious. He declares that the chief reason for illness is that people do not want to be well, the workmen's compensation act being proof of this. Yet shortly he states that diseases are ascribable to many agencies, such as micro-organisms and chemical poisons, and that there is no need to question the influence of those which have been established by careful scientific research.

The first of the two authors of "Our Fear Complexes" has written our best history of science; the second is a psychiatrist of the Los Angeles Juvenile Court and a lecturer on child problems in the University of California. From the historian we have an interesting outline of the various methods of mental healing—from Greek oracles, Roman shrines, the king's touch, the command of Mesmer, and the mysticism of Mrs. Eddy up to the "modern dream doctor" Freud and the auto-suggestionist Coué. Freud is criticized as overemphasizing the sexual, Coué as being not very original. The views of both are to be supplemented by the recent investigations of the endocrine glands. A unique section deals with the early study of these ductless glands and is followed by an extremely interesting account of their connection with courage, fear, health, and personality.

Mr. Watts's work starts with an illuminating description of the prescientific view of mental abnormality and brings the subject up to date by applying it to crowd psychology. The popular writer commits the fallacy of reifying the group mind, of turning a concept into a thing. This author does not. No theory, he declares, accounts for the way in which contagious notions take hold of the unit minds of the crowd. They are like fungoid growths and can be described as of inferior social value. The English writer, probably with the Northcliffe press in mind, tells how the reader of popular journals is made ready to receive suggestions, to vibrate in sympathy with others, to act in imitation of his neighbors through an appeal to his childish and even his savage side. One is reminded of the mental antics of the great American public, a public which Lincoln said was "a great big baby." So the chapter on the herd instinct here will please the tough-minded individualist who is sick of mass moral-uplift, of "nation-wide" drives, of "national" weeks devoted to anything from piety to prunes.

Yet the herd instinct exists, and how to canalize it in education is the first task of the author as an educator. The

teacher, he says, must thoroughly understand the conditions, dangers, and limits of suggestibility. Now the "mass" method has been tried in England in certain types of school celebrations, such as the service, the homage, and the memorial celebrations. An ingenious example of the last is one in honor of Abraham Lincoln. Others that have been already found successful range from Joan of Arc to Shelley. This reminds one of Auguste Comte's Positivist Calendar; but the pompous services of the Religion of Humanity failed, as they were evidently fit less for adults than for children. The rest of this suggestive work contains a valuable historical résumé of the origins of modern psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, together with a sound criticism of the defects of the current intelligence tests—pointing out that they are tests of education rather than of capacity.

The last of the five books has a modest title as befits the work of an expert. The author first states that the mind as such is not definable, for in surveying its environment it knows more of the world than of itself. The human mind has been in the making at least a half million years, yet there is no evidence that man himself has advanced in his development at anything like the rate at which he has been able to develop control of his environment. Such statements, and they seem to be true, call a halt on the talk of the Couéites as to "Self-Mastery" and the immediate control of the future of the race. Meanwhile we have to work through current catchwords about the existence of a "psyche" and its alleged phases of the pre-conscious, the personal unconscious, and the racial unconscious. And finally, adds this medical author, there is much bad thinking in medicine itself, especially on the point of wishful thinking. His work can be highly recommended as possessing a tonic critical quality. It is almost Baconian in its warnings against "philosophy as one would."

WOODBIDGE RILEY

A Passionate Mystic

The Grand Inquisitor. By Donald Douglas. Boni and Live-right. \$2.50.

WHOEVER pours the solvent of thought upon the visible world will find it melting away, and whoever, rasher yet, applies to it the explosive of passion is destined to see it rent before his eyes. No philosopher yet ever thought long about a table or a stone without reducing it to something which the eye cannot see or the brain imagine, without making of it the shadow of an idea or a swarm of atomic meteors; no man ever lived long in the world of emotions without finding that feelings alone are solid and unquestionable things. Whatever the "realities" among which we move may be they are not, as even the most materialistic philosophers will admit, what they seem; and this world of objects which delude us with their shape and texture and color is only, as the physicist will tell you, a phantom of the brain which has been stimulated to activity by the impingement of innumerable vibrations; or it is only a mist created by the passions, like the smoke cloud which hangs about the volcano's crest. That he hates or loves, desires or fears, no man will deny, for of these facts and of these alone he has unquestionable knowledge; but that there exist any other realities no man can with any assurance affirm, cling though he may to the pathetic illusion that shadows are realities. He knows that the clarity which penetrates this illusion is the clarity called madness. The world of appearances is, to change the metaphor, that island which Melville said was "surrounded by all the terrors of the unknown world," and it is wise to heed his awful warning: "Set not off from that green isle, thou canst never return." Yet there are those who, like him, are cast off; and soon they find themselves, like him, at the mercy of ever-changing and formless waters in which floats not a straw to be clutched.

Whatever else he may be, the author of "The Grand In-

quisitor" is such a man, and he has told, perhaps in the form of a parable, the story of his casting away. The interpretations put upon his fable will be as many, I fancy, as his book has readers, for he has wisely refrained from ever attempting to put his conception in the form of a syllogism; and I, for one, am compelled to admit that I cannot say, in intellectual terms, that it means this or that. What, however, one can hardly escape from saying is that few if any novels have been permeated by a more passionate sense of the unknown world which surrounds our green isle or of that sea of formless eternity in which our bubble Time seems to float. Seldom has "reality" been attacked from more different angles and seldom has it been more completely shattered. The characters move in and out of our world, or rather they wander like ghosts between it and the bottomless abyss; so that the physical world forms or fades like the shapes of a mist, seeming now as solid as stone ever seems and melting now into nothingness. It is a mad story—the story of a man for whom emotions took on the visible shapes of reality while objects faded away, and who found himself cast out of the world of time into the changeless world of eternity where feelings, frozen into immobility, constitute the sole universe; but, impossible though it may be to recount, it is shudderingly terrible. The author has felt, and has felt with such intensity that the saying of Havelock Ellis, "There are no hard facts except the facts of emotion," becomes here a literal truth.

Few scenes in contemporary fiction are more nearly unforgettable than that in which the hero, struggling to remain in the world of time, attempts a game of tennis with a friend only to find the ball that is coming toward him suddenly suspended motionless in space as, time stopping, he slips back into eternity. It is, perhaps, difficult quite to grasp the story as a whole, but it contains a group of scenes like this which reveal an imagination of extraordinary power; and it has writing to match. Nowhere has better expression been given to the utter loneliness which overcomes the ego when it realizes that it can know nothing but itself:

Even the wise and contemplative elephant can know the tiger only as a flash of gold and black, a burning shadow in the sun, a soft snarling appearance trampled under his great feet and gored by his tusks. He knows the stain upon his tusks for the blood of the tiger. He knows it must be the tiger's blood. He does not know the tiger. . . . Please don't ask me to forgive you or anything of that sort. You don't forgive the snowstorm which freezes off your finger. You don't forgive the fire that burns out your eyes. You simply admit the force of natural energy, and play tennis with a finger gone or go tapping down the street with a cane.

To the ego once cognizant of its solitariness there is nothing else real enough to be understood, nothing real enough to be even blamed. It feels the blow but it cannot see the arm; it suffers but it cannot cry out to anything that will hear. The pain is there; nothing else exists.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Biography by Formula

Genie und Charakter. Zwanzig männliche Bildnisse. Von Emil Ludwig. Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt.

EMIL LUDWIG is a hard-working and useful biographer. But if he had not taken so seriously the critical doctrine of the *passion maitresse* his books would make brighter reading and might be quite as useful. When a critic undertakes to unlock every compartment of so complex a nature as that of the Danish impressionist novelist Hermann Bang, for example, with the one miraculous key-trait Melancholy (*Schwermut*)—*Schwermut* made him a failure on the stage; *Schwermut* made him a tireless worker; *Schwermut* blocked his way to objectivity; *Schwermut* held him back from suicide—he simplifies the problem beyond all verisimilitude. Monochromes are uncon-

vincing. If Rembrandt is a first cousin to Hamlet, Hermann Bang certainly comes of some other stock. If Carl Peters failed in Africa because of the conflict in his soul between the philosopher and the man of action, it is hard to see how a similar formula made of Bismarck the most successful public administrator of his time and of Frederick the Great a marvelously constant conqueror of circumstances. The psychologist-biographer would do well to furnish his readers with concrete facts, and not simply with his own bald and lonely conclusions.

Ludwig's Twenty are three German statesmen, Frederick the Great, Stein, Bismarck; three Africans, Stanley (American reporter type), Peters, Rhodes (the man who knows everything essential to his purpose and nothing else); three modern statesmen, Lenin (with Lloyd George the strongest practical realist of the generation), Wilson (no formula, but a prophecy: father of a posthumous child, the United States of the World), Rathenau (a German who could both think and act—so a rare German—but not feel); three artists, Leonardo, Shakespeare (the disdained lover), Rembrandt (studied in his eighty-four self-portraits); Voltaire (he furnishes his own characterization, finer than anything of Ludwig's discovering: supple as an eel, lively as a lizard, tireless as a squirrel), Byron, and Lassalle (men who were their own end and purpose); Goethe and Schiller ("Schiller struggles, Goethe grows"); Richard Dehmelt ("... dieser zur Ruhe gekommene Vulkan, der keineswegs erloschen war"); Bang; and the relentless Prussianized Austrian quartermaster-general Karl Ganzolph von Sendler. None of all this lives up to the promise of the preface, which begins: "The most modern of all portraitists has been dead for exactly eighteen hundred years. His name was Plutarch and he came from Boeotia." Emil Ludwig is no Plutarch, and, despite this running start, no Chesterton.

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Books in Brief

The Diary of a Dude-Wrangler. By Struthers Burt. Scribner's. \$3.

Mr. Burt is a ranchman with Eastern trimmings, standing with reluctant feet where the dude and cowboy meet. His motive in going out where he could have the Rockies as a background was to get away from crowds, from cities where life is too filled with reactions, and where too many of the reactions are automatic. He soon found himself functioning in the capacity of a buffer between the West and the tenderfoot, and this book is an interesting account of a life not "blurred by the percussion of too many events."

What La Follette's State Is Doing. By Chester C. Platt. Batavia (New York) Times Press. \$2.50.

In recent years Wisconsin has become the foremost State of the Union from the standpoint of advanced legislation and political tendencies, supplanting in that regard such earlier experiment stations as Iowa, Kansas, and Oregon. As State manager of the Wisconsin Nonpartisan League Mr. Platt has had a personal part in much of this progressive history, and he has woven into his book a considerable amount of documentary material that has come into his hands, some of it bearing directly on Wisconsin and some relating to the liberal movement in general. This gives the volume a somewhat miscellaneous character and encroaches upon space that one would like to see devoted to a fuller description and analytical account of the political, economic, and social progress of the State. At the same time Mr. Platt has considered these aspects in chapters on part-time schools for children who want to continue their education although obliged to go to work, on university extension courses for adults, on cooperation, on labor legislation, on the direct-primary movement, on public ownership, and on other topics. Wisconsin, Mr. Platt points out, was not only the first State to ratify the woman-suffrage amendment but the pioneer in legislation of its own to carry equality of the sexes still farther.

Drama

Pumping for Tears

WHEN an author designs to trick me into laughter I will meet him halfway because I approve of his amiable conspiracy and I wish him success; but when he asks of me my tears I demand that he, too, shall weep, and I do not forgive him easily if I suspect that he is merely playing, however skilfully, upon my feelings—for I am Hamlet enough to resent with no inconsiderable bitterness the ungentlemanly assumption that he knows my stops and that he can play upon them. Whoever the author of "The Dark Angel" (Longacre Theater) may be—whether he is, as rumor has it, the dazzling Mr. Michael Arlen or whether he is some other and equally skilful young man—I accuse him hotly of making this ungentlemanly assumption, and I shall remain, in revenge, obdurately unmoved by the tragic tale which he has concocted.

Already his play has had a measure of both popular and critical appreciation, and it seems marked out for considerable success; but the fact remains that it is not, as it pretends to be, a tragedy at all. It is, instead, one of those cold-blooded assaults upon the emotions which not seldom pass for the real thing and which not seldom also become both more popular and more profitable than that which they imitate. They leave the critical spectator less purged by pity and terror than vaguely resentful that he has been called upon to sympathize with the sham sorrows of sham people created by some technician rubbing his hands behind the scenes. "I wonder," said Dr. Johnson on one occasion to a lady novelist of lachrymose

tendencies, "whether you have a right to make your readers to suffer so much," and though it is not recorded that the lady in question caught the criticism implied, it was not a remark likely to be called forth by any work of genuine feeling. What the good doctor meant was that the lady should not take suffering so complacently, and it is a remark which those who find the writing of tragedy too good fun would do well to bear in mind.

The situation about which the play in question revolves is the now familiar one of the returned soldier who pretends to be dead in order that he may not be forced to call upon his promised bride to sacrifice her life for a mutilated man, and the author has attempted to cover the lack of any true or spontaneous feeling in the treatment of this hackneyed theme by padding the two middle acts with smart but irrelevant social comedy and by a lavish use of those stage tricks through which mechanical writers hope to awaken in the minds of their audience the emotions they cannot generate in themselves. Undoubtedly they are, in this case, good tricks, and undoubtedly they accomplish to a certain extent their purpose; but they never transcend their nature. When, for example, the hero—who happens in this case to be blind—skilfully plots to deceive the girl who has discovered him by carefully noting the position of several objects about the room in order that he may appear to see and pick them up, the pathos is cleverly underlined. There are a number of such scenes, but the hand of the author pulling the strings is all too evident, and one can almost hear the chuckle of delight with which he must have said to himself as he conceived the incident: "I'll bet that will bring the catch to their throats."

This absence of feeling, being a purely negative thing, can hardly be analyzed, but incidentally it may be remarked that here as almost invariably it is accompanied by a strange phenomenon—the tendency to endow the chief persons concerned in the action with an inhuman perfection of character—and one may almost state it as a maxim that the feebler the feeling of an author the more virtuous are the persons whom he creates. Real persons with real emotions never fail to engage the sympathy, but the puppet hero or the puppet heroine must be of virtue all compact; and it is a fact not without significance that the heroine of "The Dark Angel" is a prig. The dilemma in which she is caught is one which would demand pity for any human victim, and one which would indeed be the more pathetic in proportion as the person concerned had more of the human weakness to desire happiness and fulfillment; but she is made in this case too anxious for sacrifice to be pitied and too good to be believed. It is very difficult to imagine in cold blood what a person in such a situation would do or would say; everybody knows what he ought to say and ought to do. That, perhaps, is the reason.

At the Provincetown Theater a one-act dramatic version of Sherwood Anderson's "The Triumph of the Egg" is coupled with a brilliant revival of Eugene O'Neill's "Diff'rent." When I saw "Diff'rent" some years ago I thought it the best American play to date, and I do not believe that anything written since would make this an untenable opinion. To see it a second time is to perceive more clearly than before its purely dramatic virtues; and it is difficult to understand how anyone, even though he found the theme distasteful, could fail to appreciate the extraordinary conciseness and force of the dialogue. Mary Blair and Perry Ivins give very fine performances.

"Natja" (Knickerbocker Theater) is an operetta which rejoices in a score adapted from Tchaikowsky. It is unusually well sung, and it is one of the most enjoyable musical entertainments of the season in spite of the fact that the book, unlike the music, never rises above the level of the most commonplace musical comedy. "The Dove" (Empire Theater), a lively melodrama, is expertly written and expertly played; "The Rat" (Colonial Theater) is crude beyond belief. The story of the apache who loves a pure girl has never been worse told.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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APARTMENT?

From May to October there is generally an exodus of *Nation* readers from the city to the country, and a corresponding number coming to the city to attend the Universities or for other reasons.

Will anyone who has an apartment to rent, or who will want to rent one for the summer, send us as detailed information as possible about it, so that we may make recommendations to *Nation* readers who ask us for information. Address Dept. A, care *The Nation*.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

A meeting to protest the State Department's restrictions on
COUNT MICHAEL KAROLYI
first President of the Hungarian Republic
At luncheon, Saturday, March 7th
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Courses beginning
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March 14.....SCOTT NEARING
11:00 a. m., "Applied Sociology"
1:30 p. m., "Current Events"

March 27, 8:30 p. m.,
LOUIS UTERMAYER
"Talks on Modern Poetry"

Sat., March 7, 3:30 p. m.....PROF. E. M. EARLE
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THE letters from Russian political prisoners on the island of Solovetsky, from which we have taken the sections which follow, form a part of the material collected by investigators in Paris and Berlin for the International Committee on Political Prisoners in New York. Their authenticity has been certified by competent attorneys. The first letter, written in June, 1924, was signed by all the Socialist groups in the prison and some of the Anarchists.

DEAR COMRADES: We, Socialists, prisoners of the Bolshevik Government, thrown without trial into the Solovetsky concentration camp, on the Solovetsky Islands, cut off by the ice floes of the White Sea from the living world—turn to you, Socialists and leaders of the world's labor movement. We address ourselves to you in order to convey through you to the workers and Socialists of the whole world the story of the unexampled bloody tragedy which was enacted on December 19, 1923, on the Solovetsky Islands, and the truth of which the Bolshevik Government would like to conceal but shall not conceal from the workers of Russia, Europe, and America. . . .

We are under an administration composed, from the bottom to the top, with rare exceptions, of criminal elements who were sent to the Solovetsky Islands to serve sentences for crime and who have become the masters of the lives and deaths of thousands of people, "expiating" their old crimes and winning pardon for themselves at the price of cruelty, inhumanity, and new crimes.

To complete the picture, in the hands of this administration is a detachment of the Red Army serving as "guards," into whose hands systematically, persistently the commanders daily hammer the simple thought: "Socialists are the enemies of the 'Workers' and Peasants' Government,' and they must be treated rough."

Such is the condition which the Bolshevik Government created for the Socialists in the Solovetsky concentration camp. It was very obvious from the outset that in such circumstances bloodshed was inevitable. We repeatedly wrote about it to Moscow, to the highest organs of the Government. We declared it to the representatives of the Government who came to the Solovetsky Islands to inspect the concentration camp. We warned. In answer we received false promises, hypocritical assurances that everything would be all right.

But blood flowed. The G.P.U. provided the immediate pretext for the massacre. Not being satisfied with throwing us into the distant, lurid North, hundreds of versts from a central city, away from our relatives and dear ones, the G.P.U., having cut us off from the whole world and having deprived us of the right of regular communication by letter, conceived the idea of turning the Solovetsky concentration camp into a real jail with the ordinary prison regime.

This pretext was found at the very moment when the navigation between the Solovetsky Islands and the continent was closed and we were facing a long Northern winter, long months of complete isolation from the outside world.

For a beginning it was decided to deprive us of the freedom to promenade in the prison yard—that small plot of land surrounded by barbed wire which was assigned for our use and which was carefully guarded by sentinels from several watch-towers. We were not permitted to promenade outside our yard even when guarded by soldiers, but our promenading hours were not limited. And it was this "license" which seemed terrible to the G.P.U.

We were warned by the administration on December 16 that it contemplated limiting our promenading hours from 9 in the morning to 6 in the evening. The committee of elders declared a decisive protest. In the course of three days after-

ward we promenaded as of old, and the conversations with the administration on the subject were not renewed. Suddenly, on December 19, after five o'clock in the evening, the political prisoners of the Savvatievo Cloister were handed a written order: Promenading is permitted in the future from 9 o'clock in the morning until 6 in the evening. The order is to be announced at roll call.

Since the roll call is usually taken after 8 o'clock in the evening it was the clear sense of the order that it would take effect the following day, December 20. Nevertheless, at half past five the sentinels began to request the comrades who were out in the open to return into the building, and as they continued to promenade the sentinels fired from the watch-towers several shots, apparently into the air. The promenading continued. Then a chain of soldiers and prison officials, numbering about fifty men, spread out along the fence surrounding the prison yard, covering the building from three sides. The commander of the squad turned to the absolutely peaceable promenaders with the request to enter the building, without warning once that in the event of disobedience he would fire. The promenading comrades formed the definite impression that in the worst event it was planned to push them back toward the building, almost nobody conceiving of the possibility of shooting. But after the third request to enter the building the order suddenly rang out: "Take aim! Fire!" And immediately afterward followed a volley and deafening continuous shooting from separate sections.

The promenading comrades failed to comprehend at first what had happened. They were convinced that the shots were made into the air to terrify them, so wild, senseless, improbable seemed the shooting of peaceful promenaders. But the first victims, the groans of the wounded, the warning cries from all sides, "There are wounded!" left no doubts as to what had occurred. The murderers heard these cries, they saw the comrades pick up those who fell and carry them in the direction of the building, but they had not had enough bloodshed, and after the first volley came a second and then a third. The fire was aimed not only at those who remained in the yard, but also at those comrades who were carrying the wounded and at those returning to the building. The unanimous testimony of our comrades bears witness to it, the marks of bullets around the entrance to the building unequivocally point to it, some of these marks being at the level of a man's height, others a little above. After the third volley, the yard was emptied and the firing stopped.

It was before six o'clock when the wounded were carried into the building and we were able to count the victims. The terrible tragedy was enacted with insane, cinematographic speed. Somebody's evil will had consciously driven it, without a breathing spell, to its bloody climax. The order was to be announced at the roll call. It was announced three hours previously. Even according to the order the promenading was permitted until six o'clock. The killing began at half past five, and by six the field of slaughter was already cleared, and only the blood in the snow remained to tell of what had happened. Not the slightest attempt was made on the part of the administration to forestall the catastrophe. The elder of the political prisoners who tried to make his way into the headquarters of the commandant was not admitted by the guards, in accordance with orders. . . .

Neither the local commandant nor, moreover, the prison guards would have fired at the imprisoned Socialists if they had not previously received assurances of their complete inviolability for the consequences. Of course, most of the soldiers fired into the air, otherwise the shooting would have become a wholesale massacre of the promenaders and the victims would have been counted by the score, but it is beyond any doubt that part of the soldiers and guards received orders to fire at the prisoners and that in one form or another corresponding in-

structions were given to the administration of the camp and the commanding officers. Just before the shooting there came to Savvatievo Cloister the chief of the department of the Northern camps, Nogtev. He knew of the order to limit the promenading hours, he knew of all the preparations for the slaughter. We do not know what his orders were to the commandant, but we do know that he departed from the cloister not more than a quarter of an hour before the shooting—as his acting associate later naively explained—so that he could not be charged with the guilt of what was to take place subsequently. It is significant that having prepared the murder, he hastened to wash his hands of it.

Moreover, Nogtev himself, in spite of all his conceit, would not have risked the shooting if he had not felt that Moscow would stand by him. . . .

We have told you, comrades, the truth about December 19. We have told it in order to expose to the workers of the whole world, in the name of the real socialism for which we are fighting together with you, those who disgrace, who stamp in the mud, who stain with the blood of Socialists the banner of socialism. In the name of socialism we protest before the world proletariat against the policy of bloody terror being perpetrated on the Socialists of Russia. And we know our protest will find a fraternal response in the heart of every honest workman, of every Socialist.

The letter from which we quote the following paragraphs was received by the "foreign delegation" of the Social Democratic Labor Party of Russia in Berlin. The signature is not given and it is undated but was apparently written in August, 1924. After describing the islands and the condition of overcrowding in the prison, the letter charges the administration with an effort to place the political prisoners under the regulations applied to the criminal inmates. It relates the hardships suffered especially by students and a group of Kronstadt sailors involved in the Kronstadt uprising of 1921. In regard to the "recognized Socialists," who sign the letter, the following statements are made:

I have already mentioned the fact that the administration of the camps and Moscow are pursuing a policy of abolition of the political regime. . . . The question of self-service is now in an extraordinarily acute phase. The plan is to force us to do compulsory labor, and for a beginning efforts are being made to have us cut timber for our needs, to heat the bathhouse, to cart out the refuse, etc. . . . Up to the present time we have never done compulsory work even for our own needs in any of the prisons. In Pertominsk and, in the course of a year, in Solovetsky we voluntarily attended to certain things; for instance, we cleaned the building, heated it, cooked our food, swept the yard, washed the laundry. The harder labor, such as the cutting of timber in the forest and the carting of refuse, was provided by the administration. Suddenly in the spring we were requested to take over these burdensome tasks too. We have no guaranties that this would not be followed by compulsion to provide service for the entire camp, including the administration. This we cannot accept, just as we cannot accept any kind of forced labor even for our own needs. We have been exiled administratively, and the administration must provide us with all the necessities. . . .

We were deprived of the bathhouse early in the spring, our supply of fuel was discontinued when there was still snow on the ground, and we were kept in cold and damp cells. We had to reduce our ration of hot water and warm food because there was no wood and the administration supplied none. And now we are still without wood, and it looks as if we are to have very soon only dry rations—bread and water. All this in spite of the fact that many of us are sick with scurvy and many are suffering from other diseases. We have been waiting a long time for a commission from Moscow, but so far it has not

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arrived. . . . During the winter it has become clear that Solovetsky is not supplied with sufficient food, and under the system existing here it is hardly possible to be assured of supplies. We had explained the matter to Feldman and Bokyi of the commission that came here from Moscow in the fall of 1923. They assured us that there were sufficient provisions. In spite of that, the rations fixed by them were shortened already in December, and in February the number of hospital rations was automatically reduced by the department to 15 per cent, i.e., 27 rations for 186 people. We have many more sick persons now. In accordance with the prescriptions of the prison physician, we were receiving about 50 rations before the reduction. In reality, however, we did not get even the 15 per cent, since it appeared that many articles of prime necessity, such as butter, white flour, etc., were entirely lacking in Solovetsky. The result is scurvy, wholesale cases of it. . . .

The medical aid we receive here is below criticism. The prison physicians show little interest in the sick. There are no Socialist doctors. As a general rule, few get treatment in the hospital, as there are no medical supplies. Toward spring we did not even have any iodine. The attitude toward the patients is disgusting. There have been frequent occasions when the doctor turned our sick comrades out of the hospital, without even examining them, after they had made the trip of 12 versts from the cloister. . . . The general policy of Moscow is to tighten the screws on us. The entire "constitution" designed by the commission of Feldman in 1923 was abolished from the day of the shooting, December 19. One paragraph after another is gradually being nullified. First the promenading hours and the supply of light were limited; then the conferences with the committee of elders of Muksolom were suspended; afterward, the food ration was reduced; now efforts are being made to introduce self-service and to force us to a common criminal regime (as in the case of the Kremlin prisoners); and, finally, at this moment the visits of relatives have been prohibited in our building. Those of them who came were permitted to see their folks in the headquarters, in the presence of the keepers. They traveled a thousand versts to the Solovetsky Islands, spending their last penny in order to see us, but it is impossible to talk in such circumstances. After a lapse of eight or nine months, during which we had neither visitors nor even regular correspondence, this is the last drop of cruelty.

Russian Government Reports

AN investigation of conditions on the Solovetsky Islands was made at the end of September and the beginning of October by a Russian Government commission. The summary of the report, from which the following paragraphs are taken, was published in the *International Press Correspondence* of October 29 and signed by N. Krasikov.

. . . The journey from Moscow to Solovetsky takes thirty-six to thirty-eight hours. . . . It is a great mistake to imagine that Solovetsky is a dreamy and dark prison where people are lingering in crowded and close confinement. The camp is a huge economic organism in which 3,000 workers are employed in various branches of industry. . . .

The parts of the camp where so-called political offenders are kept are entirely separated from the rigorous but regular and busy life which we have just described. They are situated in three former hermitages in various parts of the archipelago, ten to twelve versts from the center of Solovetsky life and activities. The premises allotted them are the best on the islands—they are former monastery buildings, are well built and provided with wood heating. The rooms are spacious and light with a beautiful view on to the sea and forest. They do not look in the least like prison cells, there are no bars before the windows and no guards inside the buildings. The inhabitants are Anarchists, Social Democrats, and Social Revolutionaries who

are left to themselves in the buildings within a considerable area converted into gardens and a vegetable garden inclosed by barbed wire. Anarcho-socialists do not take part in any work performed in workshops or otherwise, except that they have to prepare their meals from the foodstuffs provided by the administration and received as voluntary contributions. We visited everyone of the buildings of these parts of the camp and found them very satisfactory, except that the floors in the buildings which are in the care of the prisoners themselves were badly swept and dirty. Two of the hermitages are lighted by electricity until midnight, while one hermitage has oil lighting but will soon be provided with a small power station. In the rooms we did not find any trace of work whatever. We were informed that the political prisoners were on principle against regularly organized work which they considered compulsory and an infringement of their right to spend their time as they wanted. The administration of the camp finds it very difficult to enforce the principle of self-service, as far as the prisoners' direct needs are concerned. It has not yet been able to make satisfactory arrangements for the preparation of wood for the political prisoners' own needs. . . .

The ration provided for political offenders by the administration, as far as its nutritive quality is concerned, is much better than the ration for the ordinary criminals on the island and is even a little better than that provided for the Red Army. It consists of two pounds of bread, 48 zolotnik (about half a pound) of buckwheat, 48 zolotnik of meat, 72 zolotnik of salt or fresh fish, 12 zolotnik of fats, 18 zolotnik of oil, one pound of vegetables, 2 zolotnik of onions, 12 zolotnik of sugar per day, and one pound of tobacco per month. There is also a dietetic ration for those who require better feeding, which consists of two pounds of white bread, fresh fish, dried vegetables, milk and butter. During the winter in 1923-1924 there were periods when fresh meat, onions, and fresh vegetables were replaced by pickled cabbage and preserved meat or fish, because during the first year of its existence the camp was not sufficiently provided with cattle and vegetables.

It should also be borne in mind that political offenders have the great advantage over ordinary criminals of receiving parcels from outside containing wheaten flour, butter, sugar, chocolate, cocoa, and other nourishing foods, unlimited quantities of which can be supplied to the political prisoners, about 500-600 poods a year (1 pood = 36 English lbs.). There are at present between 320 and 330 political prisoners—men, women, and children. Some of the latter were born on the island and others were brought there by their parents and live with their families.

Walks and outdoor exercise during the winter season are permitted all day long up to 6 p.m. . . .

The exiles are organized according to their party factions, and every faction has its elders for the conduct of affairs within the camp and for relations with the administration of the camp.

There is a hospital in the central camp with an adequate medical staff. Every camp has its own ward under the control of an experienced medical assistant. The infirmary doctors visit the hermitages, and in some cases when necessary the sick are taken to the central infirmary or to the mainland. Since the establishment of the camp there has not been a single case of medical assistance having been refused to a sick person. Statements in foreign emigrant papers about the sickness (sic) and helplessness of those who are ill are cold-blooded and calculated lies. In addition to the official staff there are in every hermitage doctors among the prisoners who look after the patients together with the manager of the ward. Provision of medicines has never been refused.

Further details regarding the rights and privileges of political prisoners on Solovetsky are contained in statements issued by the Russian Foreign Office late in October.

The right of moving around. There are three camps in Solovetsky, one of which is situated on a separate island. Within the barbed-wire inclosures is a large area which can be variously utilized by the prisoners. Last year the experiment was

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made of permitting the politicals to pass their time in picking berries under guard all over the island. The prisoners left the inclosures in small groups of three accompanied by a guard. But they scattered in the woods and there was no possibility of watching them or even of gathering them together in the evening when it was necessary to return. . . . As a consequence the right of leaving the inclosure was suspended and the present demands are an attempt to revive that experiment on a larger scale. . . . The administration would be willing to make concessions on condition that the prisoners mutually pledge themselves not to run away. . . . However, the prisoners have refused and still refuse to give this pledge.

Receiving visitors. The politicals demand the reintroduction of the order prevailing in 1923 when relatives and friends of the prisoners were allowed to live for a week in the same building with the prisoners. The visitors brought with them gifts for the prisoners and there is no doubt that they took out with them . . . communications to be sent abroad. When an attempt was made to search them it was met by loud protests and threats. This order was therefore found unpracticable. . . . At present the visitors are lodged in a separate building and they meet the prisoners for one hour a day during seven days. . . .

We draw attention to the fact that the political prisoners are not subjected to a prison regime; they are only isolated from the rest of the world. This means that they may move about at

will not only within the buildings but also within large areas outside surrounded by barbed wire. . . . They have a lake where they may row and fish. The island is isolated from the mainland during the five winter months. But even then the mails are received twice a month. . . .

Russia's Record on Civil Rights

WE print below a partial list of documents and articles which have appeared in *The Nation* during the last four years relating to the question of civil rights in Russia: Russia: Smoked-Glass or Rose-Tint.

By H. G. Alsberg June 15, 1921
The Abolition of the Cheka April 5, 1922
The Russian Communists and Their Opponents . . . Sept. 20, 1922
Decree Establishing Administrative Exile Sept. 20, 1922
Protest Against the Sentence of the Social Revolutionaries, October 4, 1922
The Moscow Sentence November 29, 1922
How the Jews Fare in Soviet Russia February 28, 1923
The Bolshevik Drive on the Church. By Arthur Ruhl, April 11, 1923
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